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Lesbian/gay parents dealt legal setback

New York's highest court refuses to expand the definition of 'family' and rules that parenting rights are based solely on biology

By Elizabeth Yukins

ALBANY, N.Y.—A serious blow was dealt to lesbian and gay rights recently when the state's highest court denied a lesbian non-biological parent the right to visit the child she had helped raise. In a May 2 ruling that will have far-reaching effects, the Court of Appeals decided that parenting rights are based purely upon biological relations, and that a person's emotional connections to a child could not be taken into account when defining family relationships.

In the decision, the court established an extremely narrow definition of what constitutes a family. For lesbian and gay legal activists who had sought to legitimate same-sex couples through the judicial system, this ruling signifies a serious setback for non-traditional family rights.

"The court focused purely on the definition of family; it did not even take the child's best interests into account," said Paula Ettelbrick, legal director for the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, who represented the woman seeking visitation rights. "The majority decision was a 1950s approach to family, without any context for the 1990s reality of how people live their lives," she told *GCN*.

'She is not a parent'

The case, *Alison D. v. Virginia M.*, involved two lesbian partners who had co-parented a child together. After Virginia M. was artificially inseminated and gave birth to a baby boy, the women jointly cared for and raised the child. When their relationship ended two and a half years later, Alison D. continued to support the child financially, and visited him a few times a week. This arrangement continued for four years, until Virginia M. decided to terminate Alison D.'s contacts with the child.

In its decision, the court said that it did not question Alison D.'s parenting capabilities. In fact, the court noted that Alison D. "nurtured a close and loving relationship with the child," and that her petition for visitation rights stemmed from "her understandable concern for and interest in the child."

Despite this acknowledgment, the court refused to recognize the validity of Alison D.'s parenting rights. In a 6-1 decision, the judges found that she has no right to seek visitation because "she is not a 'parent'" within state law. Rejecting Alison D.'s petition that the state expand its definition of "parent," the court said, "Traditionally, in [New York state], it is the child's mother and father who, assuming fitness, have the right

to care and custody of their child...We decline to read the term parent to include categories of nonparents who have developed a relationship with a child."

An unexpected ruling

The ruling surprised many lesbian and gay rights advocates who had expected the court to follow a precedent it established in a 1989 case, *Braschi v. Stahl Associates*.

In that landmark decision, the court ruled that two gay men who had lived together for 10 years could be considered a family under New York City's rent control regulations. The same court that rejected Alison D.'s petition had earlier stated in *Braschi* that protection against eviction "should not rest on fictitious legal distinctions or genetic history, but instead should find its foundation in the reality of family life."

William Rubenstein, director of the Lesbian and Gay Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), said that the *Alison D.* decision deviates from *Braschi* and establishes a "terrible new" judicial precedent. "In comparison to the *Braschi* decision, this ruling shows that it is easier for the court to accept giving limited property rights than to accept recognizing the reality of our family relationships," Rubenstein told *GCN*. "It is clear that the court did not understand or appreciate the crucial issue they were faced with," he added.

Alison D.'s lawyer, Ettelbrick, said that she believes that sexism also played a role in the decision. "I think [the ruling] indicates that these judges are deeply threatened by the idea that lesbians have children without men," she said. Ettelbrick noted that women judges issued the lone dissenting opinions in both the lower appellate court's and the appeals court's decisions.

"Sexism certainly was a factor in the decision," echoed Rubenstein. "The best evidence of this is that all the women who heard the case, at all the court levels, were on the side of Alison, and all the men who heard it ruled against her," he said. "You've got to look at that and wonder."

Dissenting opinion

The high court's sole dissenting opinion, written by Judge Judith Kaye, touches on many of the issues that lesbian and gay legal activists felt were disregarded in the majority ruling. Citing estimates that as many as eight to 10 million children in this country are born into families with a lesbian or gay parent, Kaye denounced the narrow interpretation of

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Unions are queer

Labor activists take a stand
at conference

Groundbreaking PWA housing plan unveiled

AIDS activists and advocates praise Boston's unprecedented citywide initiative, but express concern about funding

By Elizabeth Yukins

BOSTON—Challenging the federal government's inadequate response to the housing needs of PWAs, Boston Mayor Ray Flynn announced May 8 that the city plans to develop 501 housing units specifically for people with AIDS or HIV-related illnesses. This is the largest number of housing units that any city in the nation has committed to building, and it is exactly one more than the federal government plans to develop across the country.

As part of a plan to better meet the needs of PWAs, Flynn also announced that he would appoint a person with HIV or AIDS as a full-time AIDS advisor to his office. This administrative position has been vacant since last summer, and local AIDS advocacy groups have expressed concern that the mayor is lacking an essential source for AIDS information.

Response to Flynn's announcements was positive as many activists applauded his interest in establishing Boston as a leader in PWA housing issues. "Five hundred and one units squarely challenges the callous state and federal responses to the AIDS housing situation," said Peter Medoff of ACT UP/Boston. "It is exciting that while we are fighting for AIDS housing at the state and federal level, we can take steps at the local level to show what needs to be done," he added.

"This [initiative] will force the hand of the federal government to take more responsibility," echoed Sidney Borum, deputy executive director of the Boston Living Center, a support organization for people with HIV and AIDS. "It will show the federal government that this city will not tolerate waiting any longer to help people with AIDS," he told *GCN*.

Task force recommendations

Flynn's housing initiative was formulated by an AIDS housing task force commissioned in January. Comprising representatives from numerous local AIDS

advocacy groups, the task force devised strategies by which the city could combine public and private interests to develop more housing units. Participants on the panel included co-chairs Borum and Ann Maguire, the executive director of the Boston Emergency Shelter Commission, Medoff, Robert Greenwald of the AIDS Action Committee, Holly Ladd of the Boston AIDS Consortium and Wayne Wright of the Multi-Cultural AIDS Coalition.

Task force recommendations approved by Flynn signify important steps in helping to ease the city's PWA housing problems. According to ACT UP's Medoff, there are approximately 5000 homeless people with HIV in the city. The state's Department of Public Health estimates that more than 1000 PWAs currently need assistance in securing and maintaining independent affordable housing.

The proposed city initiative will develop housing units of all different categories. PWAs will have access to a variety of living arrangements that suit their medical and personal needs, including long-term independent housing with rent subsidy and congregate housing with support staff.

According to Flynn's plan, PWAs will receive priority status when applying for public and private housing. The city will also work with AIDS service providers and public and private housing development contractors to devise ways to develop city-owned property to meet the needs of PWAs.

'A leadership position'

AIDS advocates hope that Boston's PWA housing plan will become a national model. "This particular initiative, if it works, will place Boston in a leadership position," said ACT UP's Medoff. He told *GCN* that in relation to Boston's size, the number of planned units is "extraordinary." He also said that the plan is exceptional because it integrates all different housing and development departments throughout the

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Quote of the week

"There's k.d. lang, who's gorgeous, by the way. She looks like Sean [Penn]. I met her, and I thought, 'Oh my God, she's the female version of Sean. I could fall in love with her.'"

—Madonna, in an interview in the Advocate. The pop icon was responding to a question about stars whom lesbians adore.

ACT UP plans National AIDS Lobby Days

WASHINGTON—The capital city's ACT UP chapter has designated May 24-June 3 as National AIDS Lobby Days. Organizers say that this is the first nationally coordinated grassroots effort to press U.S. senators and representatives to increase federal AIDS funding.

Members of Congress will be asked to meet with constituents affected by AIDS in their home districts during their Memorial Day recess. These citizen lobbyists will include people with AIDS, HIV-positive persons, families, friends, local AIDS community service groups, lesbian and gay activists, scientists and health professionals.

"Central to National AIDS Lobby Days," said Robert Warnock of ACT UP/DC, "is the idea that constituent lobby visits, by localizing and personalizing the AIDS epidemic, can lend a sense of humanity and immediacy to numbers that become ever more numbing as they mount."

While grassroots lobbyists will argue for increased funding in AIDS prevention, care and research programs, as well as replenishment of the Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act [the Ryan White CARE bill], an overall goal of the effort is to "lend a local face to national statistics."

"Professional lobbyists have told us, again and again, that legislators listen only when they think an issue affects their own constituency," Warnock added. "It is critical that we bring a message home to them in the districts they represent—a message that AIDS is already at hand, not just in cities, but in rural America, that AIDS is everyone's concern," he said.

Constituent lobbyists are also encouraged to press legislators for the creation and appointment of a federal "AIDS czar," who would coordinate efforts to combat the AIDS epidemic and ensure that resources are used to their best advantage.

ACT UP is organizing and promoting National AIDS Lobby Days in conjunction with the several other groups, including the AIDS Action Council, the Gay Men's Health Crisis, and the Human Rights Campaign Fund.

Those interested in participating in National AIDS Lobby Days can contact the project office in Washington for information and a lobby packet. Call (202) 328-8253 or (202) 543-1070.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Medical group backs HIV testing of patients

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.—The Medical Society of New Jersey voted April 30 to urge hospitals to administer HIV tests to all patients. Dr. Joseph A. Riggs, president of the 200-member society, told the *New York Times* that the society may also press the New Jersey legislature to make mandatory HIV testing a law. AIDS activists opposed the resolution, calling it unreliable, discriminatory and dangerous.

"Doctors will be endangered if they rely on an HIV test that can provide a false negative for up to six months after infection with HIV," said David Haskell, executive director of New York's Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC). "The public health care system will be endangered if hospitals are forced to waste precious resources testing for HIV instead of protecting providers and patients against the full spectrum of diseases and dangers," he added.

One week before the society's vote, a New Jersey Superior Court judge ruled that patients should be informed if their doctors are HIV positive. Members of the health care community argued against the ruling, suggesting that the patients should be tested to protect doctors and other patients. Many view the vote as a direct reaction to the judge's decision.

Riggs told the *Times* that the medical society's resolution is a response to reports that New Jersey is one of the states hardest hit by HIV infection. Last year, a survey of 26 U.S. hospitals by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) found that two Newark hospitals had the highest rate of HIV-infection among patient.

Richard H. McShane, a doctor who voted

for the resolution said, "As surgeons, most of us wind up sticking ourselves with needles from time to time." He dismissed universal precautions recommended by the CDC as impractical. "It is necessary to find out where the disease is in the hospital, so hospital personnel can protect other patients and themselves," he added.

Many activists fear that adopting the resolution will result in the segregation of HIV-positive patients, leading to discrimination and inferior health care.

The resolution also brings up issues of a patient's confidentiality and right to choose testing. Riggs claimed the results of the proposed HIV tests would be treated "with the upmost confidentiality," although they would be made available to all hospital staff.

Currently New Jersey hospitals must obtain specific, written permission to perform HIV testing on a patient. If the resolution is adopted, blanket consent forms signed upon hospital admittance would include such permission.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Gay rights victories

BOSTON—In two victories for gay rights here, a car dealer and a college fraternity have agreed to offer compensation to a gay man and two lesbians for anti-gay discrimination. The defendants in the cases were represented by the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD), a public interest law firm, and both settlements mark significant legal successes in challenging sexual-orientation discrimination.

In one suit, Ralph Feinberg, owner of the Lynnway Auto Exchange in Lynn, Mass., agreed April 25 to pay \$2500 to two women who filed a sexual-orientation and sex-discrimination complaint against him. The two defendants, Katherine Duquette and Laurel Sport, filed suit after Feinberg became abusive to them when their car deal fell through. The women say that Feinberg called them "ungrateful bitches," and "whores, lezzies and fucking queers," and that he struck Sport in the face with a car antenna and pushed Duquette out of the office.

In an out-of-court settlement, Feinberg agreed to pay the defendants \$2000 and donate \$500 to the American Foundation for AIDS Research. The total award of \$2500 is the maximum amount Feinberg could have been fined for public-accommodations discrimination under state law. Sexual-orientation discrimination in public accommodations was made illegal under the state's 1989 gay rights law.

In the second GLAD case, a gay man filed a housing-discrimination complaint against the Tufts University chapter of Delta Tau Delta (DTD) fraternity. The defendant, Otis Damslet, said that after he came out to a fellow fraternity member, news of his sexual orientation spread quickly. The result, he says, was a two-year long campaign of anti-gay harassment that finally made living in the fraternity house unbearable.

In a May 1 out-of-court settlement, DTD agreed to a number of conditions that include apologizing to Damslet in writing, establishing an effective fraternity social awareness committee and instituting a formal grievance procedure for resolving harassment and discrimination complaints.

"This case illustrates how the arguably legitimate notion of brotherhood promoted by fraternities degenerates into ritualized sexism and homophobia in practice," said Mary Bonauto, the GLAD staff attorney representing Damslet in the complaint.

Bonauto pointed out that Damslet's case was filed under a local housing ordinance that is similar to other municipal laws around the country. "There is no reason why someone in Austin, Texas, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania or Columbus, Ohio, to name just a few, could not use the same approach in combatting discrimination and harassment at a fraternity," she said.

—Elizabeth Yukins

Gay/lesbian Jews to meet in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO—Sha'ar Zahav, a Jewish congregation for lesbians and gay men here, will host the Twelfth Annual International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews, May 24-27.

"It will be four days of gay and lesbian Jews and their supporters learning from each other," said Barrett Brick, one of the conference organizers. "The theme this year is 'Creating Our World,'" Brick told *GCN*. "We will look at how we create communities for ourselves, and explore how we maintain supportive Jewish and gay/lesbian communities."

Paulette Goodman, national president of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG), will deliver the conference's keynote address. Goodman, whose daughter is a lesbian, witnessed Nazi atrocities while growing up in France as a member of the Jewish community.

The conference is sponsored by the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations, an umbrella group of three dozen lesbian and gay Jewish groups worldwide.

Registration is US \$160 for participants from the United States and Canada, and US \$135 for participants from other countries. Those interested in the conference should contact Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, or call (415) 861-6932.

—Jacob Smith Yang

NEA director defends gay art

WASHINGTON—After repeatedly coming under fire for failing to safeguard artistic freedom, the chair of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), John Frohnmayer, has written a strongly worded statement condemning attempts by fundamentalists to censure federal funding of gay and lesbian art.

In his letter to Congress, Frohnmayer sharply denounced Rev. Donald Wildmon's efforts to discredit the \$12,000 1991 NEA grant awarded to the producers of the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

Wildmon is president of the American Family Association, a right-wing religious organization that frequently protests gay and lesbian visibility in the media and the arts.

According to the *Bay Area Reporter*, a San Francisco gay newspaper, Wildmon complained about the film festival's grant in an April 17 letter to Rep. Charles Wilson (D-Texas). Noting that the NEA recently came under Congressional scrutiny for funding controversial art, Wildmon wrote: "Supporting with tax dollars homosexual films indicates this agency has no intention of stopping the misuse and abuse of tax dollars."

Wildmon had also written letters to Congress condemning the NEA's funding of Todd Haynes' new film, *Poison*. Although he had not seen the movie, Wildmon strongly objected to Haynes' portrayal of gay sex in prison.

Rejecting Wildmon's accusations, Frohnmayer wrote to Rep. Wilson that, "Mr. Wildmon's complaint, stripped of rhetoric, seems to be that he doesn't believe federal funds should go to homosexuals." Such a discriminatory proposition is insupportable, said Frohnmayer, because "the endowment does not blacklist nor does it refuse grants on the basis of sexual orientation."

Frohnmayer further pointed out that Wildmon's "complaint seems to urge adherence only to his 'values,' excluding the diversity which has always been protected in America and indeed has and will continue to be one of our country's greatest strengths."

Frohnmayer's support of both the *Poison* grant and the film festival comes as encouraging news to some of his critics. Frohnmayer has repeatedly come under attack for being overly conciliatory to the right wing at the expense of controversial artists' freedom of expression.

—Elizabeth Yukins

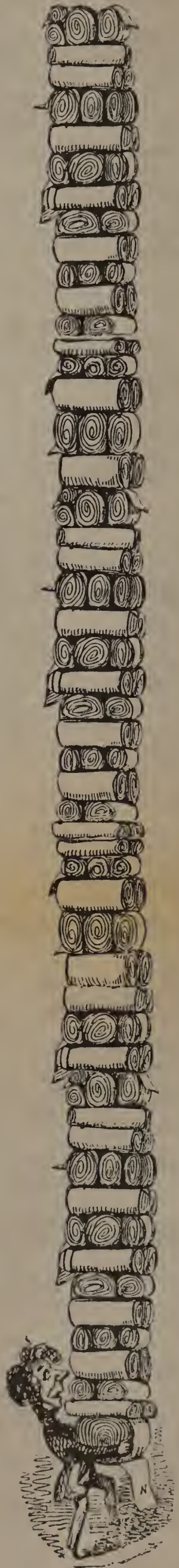
Fighting breast cancer

BOSTON—Approximately 175,000 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year. Statistics also show that breast cancer among women has significantly increased in the last thirty years. In 1960, doctors estimated that one in 20 women would be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime; current figures show that one in nine women will develop breast cancer.

In an effort to battle these rising statistics and to demand more federal funds for cancer research, women's health advocates are organizing walks, marches and demonstrations around the country on May 12, Mother's Day. The actions are intended to draw attention to the prevalence of women's breast cancer in this country, and to demand greater government responsiveness to the epidemic.

Locally, the Women's Community Cancer Project has organized a Mother's Day rally to take place at noon on the Boston Common, at the corner of Park and Tremont Streets. Demonstrators will call for more medical research, greater diagnostic services and new treatment options for women with cancer. For more information call (617) 354-9888.

—Elizabeth Yukins



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Mass. AIDS agencies decry possible budget cuts

On the tenth anniversary of the CDC's first reported AIDS case, activists and advocates blast the governor's proposed budget

By Jacob Smith Yang

BOSTON—Representatives of 11 Massachusetts AIDS agencies assembled on the State House steps April 24 in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the first AIDS case reported to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Eight AIDS activists who addressed the crowd voiced anger and frustration at the prospect of health care cuts that would affect people with AIDS and HIV. Participants displayed a banner that read "112,187 DEAD," indicating the number of deaths from AIDS in the United States since April 24, 1981.

"While the virus is eating away within my body, these budget cuts will be the last nail in my coffin," said Keri Duran, a 28-year-old woman with AIDS. "I don't deserve to die," said Duran, a member of ACT UP/Boston. "I don't deserve to watch my friends die, I don't deserve to live in poverty."

Activists charge that Gov. William Weld's promise to veto any new tax package is forcing the Massachusetts legislature to combat deficit spending solely through budget cuts. Anticipated cuts in General Relief, Medicaid, and rent and fuel subsidy programs would spell disaster for people with AIDS, who greatly rely on these programs to survive.

Larry Kessler, executive director of the AIDS Action Committee (AAC), accused Weld of trying to balance the budget on the backs of people living with AIDS. He challenged the governor to adopt the public health measures necessary to control and end the AIDS epidemic. "If he does not," Kessler added, "you can be assured that 10 years from now we will be standing in the same place with a sign that reads: 112,187 Massachusetts residents living, dying or dead from AIDS."

Currently, over 3500 Massachusetts residents have been diagnosed with AIDS, and more than 2200 have died from the disease.

Given the severity of recently proposed budget cuts, Kessler doubts that an AIDS funding increase Weld had promised will survive the budget-slashing process. "It literally looks like we got \$2 million added on one level, only to have \$50 to \$100 million cut on another," he said.

At current levels, state AIDS funding cannot provide the services needed by PWAs. "The state would need an extra \$23 million just to meet the current need," said Holly Ladd, executive director of the Boston AIDS Consortium. With an HIV infection rate of between six and eight Massachusetts residents per day, according to the AAC, the

need for AIDS services is growing rapidly.

Massachusetts, which has been especially hard hit by the nationwide recession and carries a \$2.4 billion state budget deficit, currently has the lowest bond rating of the 50 states. During last year's election, Massachusetts voters were perceived as mandating budget cuts to control the deficit.

Governors in other states have addressed budget problems by coupling budget cuts with tax increases. Weld, however, maintains a staunch anti-tax position, arguing that any tax increase would hinder the flailing economy. He says he will veto any tax package that the legislature might pass.

"By ruling out a tax increase," said Neil Cronin of ACT UP, "Weld has proved that he's no friend of the AIDS community."

Wayne Wright, executive director of the Multicultural AIDS Coalition, said the proposed cuts are part of the government's continued unwillingness to address the AIDS epidemic, particularly within marginalized communities. "A great many people with AIDS are women, children, gays and lesbians, the poor and disenfranchised, or substance abusers," said Wright. "Given these budget cuts, we begin to understand who is important and who isn't."

"The budget package will be absolutely devastating to the people we work with," Wright added. "We won't have to document it, it is going to be evident in the streets." Wright predicted that crime rates will continue to escalate in communities of color in response to the worsening AIDS epidemic. "People have no place to turn," Wright said. "Unfortunately, lawmakers won't take notice until the violence and crime spills over into other communities."

"Budget cuts, combined with low health care access, result in a virtual attack on the Latino community," said Orlando Del Valle, executive director of the Latino Health Network. Characterizing the state's past funding of AIDS programs for people of color, Del Valle said, "A little bit of money is sprinkled like water, sizzles as if it were on a frying pan, and is gone."

"It's time for the state to stop debating here [the State House] and come into the community," said Sidney Borum of the Boston Living Center. "We need to expand educational and preventative programs so that young people do not fall prey to this disease," Borum said. "Instead we're talking about spending less money, and more people will die."

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Conference focuses on 'sexual minority youth'

Concerns about AIDS and HIV top the agenda

By John Zeh

BALTIMORE, Md.—As children experience puberty at an increasingly early age, the need to educate them—and adults—about life-saving human sexuality strategies increases greatly, youth workers were told at a conference on health education and risk reduction for sexual minority youth.

More than 100 teachers, church members, youth specialists, social workers, gay and lesbian activists, young gay men and at least one Catholic priest attended the conference, entitled "Affirming Diversity," here May 3-4. The conference was sponsored by 27 social service agencies providing services for youth, gay men and lesbians and people with AIDS in Delaware, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

Topping the agenda was AIDS and the "large and disproportionate subgroup" of adolescents with HIV infection. Another hot topic on the agenda was helping adults—some of whom themselves are closeted—become comfortable meeting the needs of young people.

In addition to HIV infection, sexual minority youth are at risk for health problems typical to all young people, but at a more pronounced rate, conference organizer John Hannay noted. Some of these problems include depression, isolation, suicide, drug/alcohol addiction, family discord/abuse

and victimization by adults or peers. Delayed psycho-social development appears to be one root cause of these problems, he said, as well as "a lack of support mechanisms for parents and adults assisting youth in accomplishing their adolescent tasks."

Sexual minority youth—identified as gay males, lesbians, bisexuals, transvestites, and prostitutes—may constitute as much as 20 percent of the overall adolescent population, said Hannay, who noted that not all sexual minority youths grow into sexual minority adults.

Keynote speaker Jerald Newberry said educators' biggest challenge is the invisibility of gay and lesbian youth.

"One advantage of coming together here is that we can identify for each other what the issues are for [sexual minority youth] in our schools," said Newberry, a parent/community specialist at the Family Life Education Program in Fairfax County, Va., "and get the courage to look those issues straight in the eye."

"As long as society insists that a group of kids don't exist, they will continue to kill themselves, experience drug abuse, suicide and other health problems more than their non-gay counterparts," Newberry stressed.

Newberry has helped area schools develop "a fairly extensive" program for ninth and tenth graders that deals with sexuality issues, including homosexuality. □



Rep. Studds

Lesbian veteran testifies before House committee

Meanwhile, the military defends and affirms its anti-gay policy

By Jacob Smith Yang

WASHINGTON—In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, gay, lesbian, and bisexual veterans continue to press for rescission of the military's anti-gay policy. Representing the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Veterans of America (GLBVA), Army veteran Kitt Kling testified before a House subcommittee May 8. Kling's testimony coincided with the May 3 release of a Department of Defense (DoD) letter upholding the ban on gay men and lesbians. Activists called the DoD letter "arrogant" and "ignorant."

"The military services are losing some of their finest people every year to an outmoded belief that lesbians and gay men are not fit for military service," Kling testified. "The waste is incredible."

According to Kling, it costs \$12,500 to train and then discharge an individual member of the armed services. The antigay policy leads to an average of 2,000 discharges every year, resulting in an annual cost of \$25 million to U.S. taxpayers.

'Cruel mindset'

Kling was invited to testify before the House Veterans Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations as a Vietnam-era lesbian veteran.

"They wanted to know the problems of lesbians in the Army," Kling told *GCN*. "I told them what I had experienced when I was in the service in 1973. It was pretty miserable back then because everyone voiced the opinion that if you were a woman in the Army you were either a slut or a lesbian."

Kling served as an Army air traffic controller at a time when that position had first become available to women. She told of how one air field commander made it clear that he would not tolerate the presence of women in his unit. Kling avoided a confrontation by marrying a male friend to receive an early honorable discharge.

"It was a shame," Kling said, "because I feel I could have made a career of the military."

Kling also told the subcommittee about commanders' "witch hunts" for lesbians within their units. "Within the military hierarchy itself," she said, "there seemed to be this cruel mindset."

'Conduct defines the class'

DoD officials defended the homophobic policy in a reply to a March 15 letter drafted by Rep. Gerry Studds (D-Mass.), and signed by 40 members of Congress. The Congressional letter, addressed to Bush, pressing for a review of the Pentagon's policy barring all gay men and lesbians from the military, regardless of ability. It cited President Harry Truman's 1948 Executive Order, which compelled the DoD to end its racial discrimination against African-American, as an example of how Bush could end "the military's shameful discrimination."

The DoD response reiterated directive 1332.14, which flatly states that

"homosexuality is incompatible with military service." The letter's author, Capt. Ted Keating, is director of DoD Legal Policy Requirements and Resources. "There are numerous good reasons for this policy," Keating wrote, "including the necessity to maintain good order, order, morale and discipline." Keating also cited the need "to maintain the public acceptability of military service."

"The Pentagon is essentially saying that it has an obligation to mirror the worst of society's prejudices," said Studds of the DoD letter. "That is ignorant and it is wrong."

Keating dismissed any comparisons between directive 1332.14 and the racial segregation that existed in the military before 1948. "Racial discrimination is unlawful because it judges people based on the color of their skin," Keating said. "Societal attitudes about homosexuals, however, derive from conduct that defines the class, not from a neutral characteristic such as skin color."

Another rationale that the military has previously cited in banning gay men and lesbians, argues that gay personnel are more likely to be blackmailed, and are thus a security risk. Kling said this kind of reasoning is ludicrous. "In reality, if military personnel were allowed to be 'out,'" she said, "there would be no threats of repercussions to blackmail someone with."

DoD contradicts poll

The DoD's assessment that gay men and lesbians in military service would be unacceptable to the public contradicts the results of a national poll conducted April 6-7. According to the phone survey of 800 random people, 81 percent oppose the current DoD ban on gay men and lesbians. The poll was conducted by Penn & Schoen Associates of New York, a research survey firm hired by the Human Rights Campaign Fund, gay rights lobbying organization.

The DoD letter unequivocally states, "We do not plan to reassess the Department's policy on homosexuality." Tim Drake of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Military Freedom Initiative said that his request for a meeting with Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney has also been denied.

"This letter is just one more example of the Department's official policy of stonewalling on the issue," Drake said. He described the letter as "arrogance at its worst."

Kling hopes that through her organization, the issue of gay men and lesbians in the military will finally be addressed by the federal government. "We want to start a lobbying effort and build up a letter-writing campaign to the point where we have the numbers to be heard," she said.

"We, too, are Americans, we are fit and we have served, honorably and well," Kling told the House subcommittee, "Let us stand proudly with our brothers and sisters."

—filed from Boston

COMMUNITY VOICES

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Organizers speak out

Dear GCN:

We, the organizers of the successful Indigo boycott, are writing in response to the biased reporting by GCN reporter Elizabeth Yukins. When you call something a "news analysis" it should be that. We find this problematic in that the article presents the events from the writer's white perspective. It was subjective, inaccurate and clearly racist.

We object to the character bashing of Nsomeka Gomes, for example when Yukins refers to the MCAD incident which is irrelevant to this case. Furthermore, important facts were suppressed, making Gomes appear illegitimate in her current claim of racism.

We object to inaccurate quoting. Lakhana Peou's words were attributed to Sharon Lim-Hing. Yukins obviously can't tell the difference between two Asian women.

We object to the inordinate space given to Indigo staff and management. This is a classic case of discrediting the victim by focusing on the oppressor's false justification. Also, Indigo was always given the final word in the article, giving Indigo's point of view more force.

We object to the racist characterization of Gomes as the troublemaking ringleader, simply because she is African American. On the other hand, Peou and Lim-Hing were portrayed as mere "boycott supporters," not

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organizers with Gomes, again perpetuating the racist stereotype of Asians as docile and submissive.

Elizabeth Yukins writes from a white lesbian perspective, which was detrimental to the reporting of the boycott. She interviewed us with the verbal assurance that she would state in her article that she is "an ignorant white woman." This important fact was never printed. Yukins attempted to give the reader the impression the stories relating to the incident are "confusing" and "disturbingly contradictory." This personal confusion sets the tone for the entire article. Yukins writes: "Patrons of the bar are put in the difficult position of having to decide whether or not to support the boycott without conclusive information." We gave her all the necessary information, but Yukins could not disalign herself from her white sisters at Indigo and report objectively. Yukins then arrogantly prescribes: "This boycott may ultimately benefit the lesbian community by compelling us to re-examine racism once again." Yukins has the audacity to set herself up as an authority on racism.

It is evident that there is an economic relationship between GCN and Indigo. Indigo has advertised in GCN on a weekly basis since its opening. Given this relationship, we question GCN's ability to report objectively.

Despite the inaccurate, biased, and libelous reporting of the boycott, we are victorious. Indigo's principal partner, Richard McKinnon negotiated with us on March 29, 1991. All of our demands were met: a) McKinnon apologized for the racist incidents; b) Indigo manager Andrea Boyer instituted an employee policy of equal treatment for all patrons; c) in the future, Indigo will immediately respond to any reports of discrimination; d) Indigo staff, management and ownership will participate in continuing anti-racism workshops; e) Indigo will include more women of color in its advertising (see ad in GCN) and inside the club.

By the way, Elizabeth, you were spotted crashing the Asian Eye to Eye workshop (for Asians only) at the Beyond Militarism, Violence and War conference when it took place at Brandeis University on March 24, 1991. When the facilitator said that this is for Asians only, you disrespectfully and intrusively remained, making many workshop participants uneasy and distrustful. So honey, you need to "re-examine racism once again."

In strength,
Nsomeka Gomes
Association For Right On Sisters

Sharon Lim-Hing
AMALGM

Lakhana Peou
AMALGM

Umbrella terms

Dear GCN:

In the thirteen years since my partner and I came out, I have heard several discussions of the terms "gay," "lesbian," "queer," "faggot," and "homosexual," but although I am not usually regarded as obtuse, I still do not understand the objections raised by Tim Campbell and others to the term "homosexual."

I do not hold, with the unspecified "writers" with whom Campbell quotes, that we need "more than one noun for gays and lesbians," but I do feel that we need one. We need one noun, as free of pejorative connotations as we can find, that includes both gays and lesbians and that differentiates them from people who are neither gay nor lesbian. The essential difference—in fact, the only reliable difference I know of—between gays and lesbians on the one hand and straight men and women on the other is that the former prefer partners of their own sex, whereas the latter prefer partners of the other sex. The terms "homosexual" and "heterosexual" denote that difference specifically, and they are the most nearly neutral descriptive terms for it that the English language provides.

Over the last thirteen years, my partner and I have met a fairly large number of gays and lesbians around the United States, and I can think of nothing in their behavior, aside from sexual preference, that does not cross the homosexual-heterosexual boundary. Note, however, that in the last sentence, if I followed Campbell's advice and divested myself of the umbrella term "homosexual" I would have had to write "Gay-straight" or "lesbian-straight" or "lesbian/gay-straight" or "gay/lesbian-straight," each of which is either one-sided or cumbersome.

Many of us who are here for the fight and not just for the party, and who really want to

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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SAFER SEX AND DRUG USE GUIDELINES

GCN offers these guidelines for all of us who are making decisions about sex and drug use in the midst of the AIDS epidemic.

HIV is a virus widely thought to be a cause of AIDS. The highest concentrations of HIV are found in blood and semen. So it's important to avoid any way in which HIV-infected blood or semen can get from one person's body into another person's bloodstream.

- Fucking (anal and vaginal) without a condom and sharing needles account for almost all the documented cases of HIV transmission.
- Oral sex without a condom or dental dam accounts for a very few documented cases of HIV transmission.
- Other ways of transmitting HIV that have not been documented but which could be theoretically risky include: fisting, finger fucking, rimming, deep kissing, sharing uncleaned dildos. The theory here is that any way HIV-infected bodily fluids get from one person into another involves risk. For example, HIV could be transmitted if a person with a cut on their hand fistfucked their partner and caused bleeding in their rectum or vagina.

HOW TO PLAY SAFER

Only you can decide what risks you are willing to take. Some people use safer sex practices with all their partners. Other people make decisions about the risks they are willing to take based on their own and their partners' sexual and drug use history and/or HIV status. People also make decisions based on how comfortable they feel negotiating safer sex in any particular situation. If you and your partner have not talked about past practices and/or HIV status, don't make assumptions. (For example, many lesbians have had unprotected intercourse with a man in the last ten years.)

- Use a condom when fucking. On the condoms, use water-based lubricants like KY. Oil-based lubricants like Crisco, Vaseline, and baby oil may make condoms break.
- Use a condom when sucking dick if your partner is going to come in your mouth. If HIV-infected cum or pre-cum gets in your mouth, it may get in your bloodstream through cuts in your gums or sores in your mouth.
- Use dental dams (latex squares) when going down on a woman if she is having her period or has a vaginal infection. Menstrual blood and secretions from vaginal infections have more HIV than healthy vaginal secretions or urine. No information has been gathered about the concentration of HIV in "female ejaculate."
- Use latex gloves for fisting or finger-fucking if you have any sores or cuts on your hands.
- Keep semen and blood (including menstrual blood and blood drawn from piercing, cutting or shaving) out of your vagina, anus, mouth, or breaks in your skin.
- If you share dildos, vibrators or other sex toys, use a new condom each time, or clean toys with hydrogen peroxide or soap and water.
- Alternative insemination may put you at risk. Discuss this risk with potential donors or sperm banks.
- Massage, hugging, dirty talk, role-playing, masturbation (solo, with a partner, in a group) and other activities that don't let blood or semen into your bloodstream are safe.
- Alcohol, poppers or other drugs may lower your ability to make good decisions. Many people have reported that they have been unable to maintain safer sex practices after getting high.
- Good nutrition, lots of rest, exercise and nonabuse of alcohol and other drugs may help you fight all illnesses, including AIDS.

INTRAVENOUS DRUG USE

- Don't share works (needles, syringes, droppers, spoons, cottons or cookers)!
- If you must share or re-use works, clean them before and after each injection as follows: dip needle and works into bleach, draw up and release three times, dip needle and works into fresh water, draw up and release three times. In an emergency, rubbing alcohol or vodka can be used instead of bleach. Or you can boil works that aren't plastic in water for at least 15 minutes. (Use a fresh solution each time you clean your works.)

RESOURCE NUMBERS

National AIDS Hotline: 1 (800) 342-7514
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) Boston: 1 (800) 235-2331
Latino AIDS Hotline (bilingual), Boston: (617) 262-7248
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) IV Drug Use Taskforce, Boston: (617) 437-4200
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), New York: (212) 807-6655
National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC), Washington, D.C.: (202) 544-1076
Women's AIDS Network, San Francisco: (415) 864-4376

No March on Washington in 1992!

By Jenney Milner, Ed Hunt and Sue Hyde

A call has gone out to organize a March on Washington for Gay/Lesbian Rights sometime before 1994, with considerable support for a Spring 1992 or a Columbus Day 1992 March. The discussion began about a year ago in the San Francisco area and has picked up steam due to Councilmember Brian Coyle's (Minneapolis) advocacy of the idea at both the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force Creating Change Conference and the Gay & Lesbian Elected Officials Conference, both held in November, 1990.

Brian has widely circulated his call for consensus on the question; a meeting to discuss a proposed March was held in Washington on March 9, attended by about 60 people. A second meeting will take place in Washington on May 11 and 12, at which time those activists who were able to organize local discussions on the proposal will give reports from their meeting and the group will try to reach consensus on the proposal.

We believe that organizing a March on Washington before 1994 is misguided and that the negative implications of holding a March in 1992 have not been adequately considered.

Despite the plethora of political issues and sociopolitical problems which now face the gay/lesbian community, we do not identify any one or two which seem to us compelling enough to warrant a national mobilization. In 1986, we had just suffered the tremendous setback of the *Hardwick* decision and we had not yet organized a mass mobilization around the AIDS epidemic and Reagan/Bush's voluntary slaughter of thousands of our people. Together these issues were broad and deep and affected the lives of thousands and thousands of us.

As well, the mid-'80s gay/lesbian political movement at the state and local levels suffered from a lack of vigor and direction. Much due to the energizing influence of the 1987 March on Washington, there is now a tremendous amount of political organizing in dozens of communities where before 1986 there was little or nothing. Further, the 1987 March on Washington, with its eight-point demand list and its many related events, helped to solidify and clarify a political

wardens sometimes open—this helps Valerie breathe. And even though they've been threatening for over a week to transfer her to RCF they haven't done it yet. We think these little "concessions" are due to the pressure so far put on the prison; they aren't much but they might save Valerie's life.

Over the weekend of April 1 six smokers were transferred to lockdown with Valerie and her lungs are so affected she can now barely talk. Also the intercom from lockdown to the guards doesn't work; if Valerie needs emergency medical attention, she isn't able to yell to make herself heard.

Complaints can be made to: Ron Angeloni, Director of Prisons, 550 Snyder Bldg. 897, Carson City 89702 (702-883-3285); Governor Robert Miller, 606 Mountain Rd., Carson City, 89702, (702-882-2333); and Attorney General Brian McKay, 198 Carson St., Carson City, NV 89702, (702-687-4170).

If you have any questions, please call me. Thank you for your help.

For freedom,
Barbara Ruth
(415) 261-1971
3720 Suter St.
Oakland, CA 94619

You wouldn't understand

Dear *GCN*:

First and foremost, I do not wish anyone to misinterpret this as an official statement from NAPWA. The opinions expressed herein are mine and mine alone. I can no longer stand in silence as a select few try and discredit a valuable organization, which many have fought to bring into existence over the past eight years.

Allegations charging the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) with racism have spread across the country. Stating that white NAPWA officials are unresponsive to the needs of communities of color, five black members of the organizations board submitted their group resignation. If these allegations are true, my question is simple—where were these representatives while these acts of racism were taking place?

Alexander Robinson, former treasurer, stated in an interview with the *Gay*

agenda that is now firmly in the grasp of local and state activists. At what point does a national mobilization generate diminishing returns and negatively impact on local/state organizing? We do not claim to know the answer, but rather suggest that our movement does not yet need the "shot in the arm" realized from the 1987 March.

Some 600,000 of us gloried in the 1987 March. Those of us who were there are eager to do it again, and those of us who weren't out or weren't able to attend at the time are keen to feel the exhilaration and empowerment that is now mythic in our communities. In other words, we're all dreaming of flaunting it in the nation's capital. And why shouldn't we? It was a wonderful and, perhaps, once-in-a-lifetime experience. It would be great fun to participate in "national pride days" every few years to demonstrate the strength and depth of our communities and movement. But organizing a national march requires money, time and energy that is better spent at home to cope with a right wing encroaching on our rights and imposing deep and hurtful cuts in basic human services, including funding of AIDS and HIV-related programs. The favored October 1992 date is unnervingly soon and it will add to the strain we all feel as our state and local governments flounder in this recession/depression.

Finally, though we, too, appreciate good feelings generated by mass marches and gay/lesbian pride events, we question whether that is enough reason to spend literally millions of dollars to make it happen. To illustrate, if the 600,000 women and men who marched in 1987 spent an average of \$300 for the entire weekend, then the total would be \$180 million, not including the March Steering Committee budget and funds expended by national, state, and local groups on March organizing. Is it time for \$200 million worth of pride?

While October, 1992 seems to be the more favored 1992 date, there is also interest in a Spring 1992 March. Brian Coyle's proposal calls for Spring, not Fall. But, in fact, already under way in the New York area is a planning/organizing effort for a Spring 1992 national mobilization to Washington to call for national health care. It is still in its early stages and faces its own set of obstacles. However, we identify national health care as

Community News, that he thought white members of the NAPWA board didn't understand the historical background behind the differences between white and black communities. Isn't it his duty to point out these differences? It is understandable that these differences exist, but even the best informed and most sensitive whites cannot be expected to anticipate the differences, they must be told.

An example is the statement by Jerome Boyce regarding the NAPWA contract with Burrough Wellcome to conduct a nationwide survey of people with AIDS. Boyce charges plans for the survey did not include any method of distribution to communities of color. Three of the signers of the resignation sat on the executive committee, a committee that holds weekly conference calls to oversee the actions of the executive director and NAPWA. At no time during the planning of this survey, did any of these members offer this insight to Burrough Wellcome, the Executive Director or NAPWA staff. These individuals are representing the Black community, yet where is their leadership and input into the process?

Boyce also points out NAPWA's attempt to contract with the Office of Minority Health issues for people of color to sit on its committees. He states that NAPWA's efforts to enlist people of color from other organizations merely highlighted the groups inability to deal with the real issue that multi-racial organization raises. The issue of race. Perhaps NAPWA would not have the need to solicit outside participation if racial and ethnic communities were getting the representation they needed through current members of NAPWA. Such action shows NAPWA's desire to gain proper insight to the needs of minority PWAs, insight that should have been facilitated by these former members.

Mr. Robinson is a prime example of poor leadership. I for one was excited to see him appointed NAPWA treasurer, for two specific reasons. 1) He maintains an administrative degree and has experience in non-profit management; and 2) He is a DC resident, therefore able to fully take on the responsibilities of a treasurer, by being in close proximity of the national office. What occurred was a lack of commitment to the

a central issue for gay/lesbian communities.

We understand that the national health care issue may not appeal to the moderate/conservative folks in our communities or to those of us who are attracted to Washington for those good old gay/lesbian vibes. But nevertheless, we believe that attendance at a health care demonstration by large numbers of gay/lesbian people ought to be a Spring 1992 goal, certainly for organizers along the Eastern Seaboard and deep into the Middle West. Access to health care is a grave and life-threatening problem for many of us and provides coalition-building opportunities at every organizing level. We would not want to divert or divide our attentions from this issue.

As for Columbus Day 1992, it is the quincenennial of Columbus' arrival in the Americas, an event that precipitated 500 years of rape, robbery and genocide of indigenous peoples in the Americas and indeed, for the lands they called home. Crucial, national counter-demonstrations organized by survivors of a half millennium of racist bloodletting will be held that weekend in Washington D.C. A conflicting gay/lesbian March on Washington would be senselessly distracting for pre-event organizing and event scheduling. Much worse, it represents the racism and cultural imperialism of a predominantly white movement. Many of us would find nothing joyful or proud in such shameful failure to respect another, equally important movement for survival and self-determination. Indeed, we would find it impossible to attend.

In the meantime, there are major gay/lesbian events being planned that warrant our attentions and efforts. If we want to make a big splash, how about working on the 25th anniversary march to commemorate Stonewall? The June, 1994 date gives us adequate time to prepare; there is sound motivation to turn out for our movement's "riot heard 'round the world"; there's plenty of reason to celebrate; and we wouldn't be competing with any other events/actions.

Taken all together, we do not see a 1992 trip to Washington for a gay/lesbian March as useful, worthwhile or even appealing.

Jenney Milner and Ed Hunt are members of Queer to the Left. Sue Hyde is a member of Cambridge Lavender Alliance.

responsibilities of his appointment. He has charged that NAPWA did not make available to him, financial records, yet three times he scheduled appointments with NAPWA staff to review these reports. Twice, he didn't show up and the third time, he arrived 45 minutes late. If, according to his allegations, he suspected misuse of funds, and wanted to perform the duties of treasurer, why could he not make himself available? Why is he blaming NAPWA for his lack of commitment as treasurer?

Out of the five members who resigned, only one, Bart Casimir, choose to stay with NAPWA and formulate solutions to these problems. I applaud his actions. He stated, "For me, the bottom line is that we are all living with HIV infection." He further stated that he didn't see what his resignation would accomplish and hopes he will be able to make the organization accessible to everyone. This is a true example of strong leadership. I for one, look forward to his input and hope he will work hard at targeting ignorance of the issues faced by minority communities to NAPWA and other organizations, so we can work together to resolve these problems.

This group resignation places the proverbial cart before the horse. Rather than sit at the table to try and formulate a solution and sensitize the organization to the needs of minorities, these members chose to walk away. This serves nothing and no one. Stop telling me that I am a racist—and help me understand my insensitivity. Show me a solution. It is the responsibility of Black leadership to work within, rather than stand aside shouting "racist," without a base for a solution.

Is it the responsibility of the white community to second guess the needs of the Black community?—I think not! Is it the responsibility of the Black leaders to point out issues of racism, and formulate solutions?—Definitely! It all comes back to the recent phrase, showing up on T shirts, in magazines and songs—"It's a Black thing, you wouldn't understand!" *Dammit...make me understand!*

Robert Thewes
Resource and Communications
NAPWA

win the fight and not just wallow in indignation, feel that clear, noninflammatory communication with those who fear us is far more valuable than toeing the line that the politically correct "leaders in the movement" lay down.

Sincerely,
Terry Gordon Colbert
Manhattan, Kans.

'OutWho'

Dear *GCN*:

I write to you with a deep sense of hurt and a feeling of betrayal after reading the article "*OutWho* ins celebrities and others," which appeared in *Gay Community News*' April Fools' issue.

GCN has a longstanding policy of not publishing personal attacks against anyone. I feel that this article violated that policy in the name of parody. In actuality, the article was a personal attack.

As an activist and author, I have a long history of service to the community. Of course, I have made some mistakes—one of the biggest being my "outing" of Evelyn Murphy. Shortly following this action, I made a public apology to Ms. Murphy as well as admitting to a lack of judgment. But this action is certainly not the totality of who I am. I felt your article painted me as being one-dimensional and completely invalidated my positive contributions to the community.

The article was particularly disturbing to me because of my close connection to *GCN* over the years, serving as news and features writer (1975-84) and Features Editor (1980-81). I look forward each week to reading the paper and consider it to be a vital force in progressive journalism.

As you are well aware, people within the community don't always agree on political points and on strategies for defeating all forms of oppression. I would hope, however, that we could at least maintain basic respect for one another—for in the final analysis, we are on the same side.

Sincerely,
Warren J. Blumenfeld
Cambridge, Mass.

Tantrums look silly

Dear *GCN*:

I was absolutely convulsed by Rex Wockner's self-important and mean-spirited Tantrum-to-the-Editor in your April 16 issue. It was enough to make me re-read the original satire on "Wreaks Everything" in your April Fool's issue, a piece that brilliantly succeeds in making both sides in this pathetic pissing match—a male reporter versus a group of lesbians who don't want him to cover their conference—look equally ridiculous.

If, as Wockner insists, some grand principle is involved here, I cannot find it. Really, I have a lot more important things to worry about than such tripe: Friends are being diagnosed with AIDS, kids in my neighborhood are shooting at each other and killing innocent people, President Bush manipulated us into a needless war with a dictator our government had been supplying with arms for years, and I'm left wondering whether the recession-driven cutbacks in public employment will cost me my job. Get real, folks!

Wockner's furious reaction demonstrates that your satire has hit its mark, making him resemble exactly those dogmatists whom he would trash as "politically correct." As one who has written many pieces for publication over the years, I have gotten used to being criticized, attacked, satirized, and worse. It comes with the territory. As Harry Truman once said, if you can't stand the heat, get the hell out of the kitchen!

John Kyper,
Roxbury, Mass.

Urgent action needed!

Dear *GCN*:

I am writing this on behalf of my friend Valerie Fuentes. She is a Chicana-Cherokee lesbian currently serving a life sentence at the Nevada Correctional Facility.

Valerie has cystic fibrosis, which is a severely disabling lung condition. She is currently being held in lockdown in a cell with no openable windows. She is also being denied her medication and phone access to her lawyer.

The jail is threatening to transfer her to the Reno Correctional Facility (RCF), which is a tight building with no ventilation—the vent system in the building circulates cigarette-filled smoke everywhere. When Valerie was there last year she quickly developed pneumonia and has suffered permanent lung damage as a result.

There is a back door near her cell the

Housing

Continued from page 1

city's government.

Activists hope that Flynn will use his political clout to impress upon other mayors the urgency of AIDS housing issues. Flynn will become president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors in June, and his responsiveness to PWA concerns could influence other city policy makers. "Flynn could not only wield significant weight on housing issues, but he could also unify cities around AIDS concerns across the board," said the Living Center's Borum.

Initiative depends on funding

Despite their enthusiasm for the initiative, however, many AIDS activists recognize that Flynn's plan still has to be put into effect. Greenwald of the AIDS Action Committee told *GCN* that the city's ability to appropriate funds will determine the success of the program. "The city's initiative is absolutely dependent on state and federal funding," he said, adding, "I hope that we can successfully galvanize the strength of the city and local AIDS advocacy groups to pressure the federal and state government to provide money for housing for PWAs."

ACT UP's Medoff echoed, "This is a victory, but we certainly still need to keep pressuring the city to make it happen quickly." He said that because "there are lots of different demands on the city budget right now, we need to keep PWA housing a priority for the mayor."

Medoff added that funding for both the housing initiative and the new AIDS advisor will depend on the mayor's interest. "If Flynn really wants this, if it's really important to him, he can get the funding," concluded Medoff. "Money is an issue, but a greater issue is the aggressiveness and creativity Flynn needs to get it." □

Alison D.

Continued from page 1

parenthood that the court used in rejecting Alison D.'s petition.

"The court's decision, fixing biology as the key to visitation rights, has impact far beyond this particular controversy, one that may affect a wide spectrum of relationships," Kaye wrote. She said that beyond the injustice it does to lesbian and gay parents, the majority opinion also adversely affects heterosexual step-parents and common-law parents.

Kaye further pointed out that by dismissing Alison's case based on a narrow definition of "parent," the court failed to consider how the child might benefit from contact with *Alison D.* "Our holding today firmly closes the door on all consideration of the child's best interest in visitation proceedings...unless petitioner is a biological parent," she wrote.

Lesbian and gay legal activists fear that the New York ruling will have a detrimental effect on similar cases around the country. Although custody and visitation laws vary from state to state, judges nationwide will be likely to heed the opinion established in *Alison D.*

"The New York decision can only hurt us in other cases," said the ACLU's Rubenstein. "What the courts are being asked to do [in deciding same-sex custody cases] is somewhat revolutionary," he said. "If there's some way they can avoid doing it, like following another court's lead, then that's what they are likely to do."

According to Rubenstein, three similar same-sex parenting cases are pending in New Mexico, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. "These cases are all different, but in each one courts are being asked basically to judge a lesbian and gay divorce disputes," he said, adding, "As in the *Alison D.* case, the judges are finding ways to dismiss the cases, and in doing so they are basically leaving us without legal rights."

'Fight this in the legislature'

Wayne Steinman, a gay father who participates in Center Kids, a project of the Gay and Lesbian Community Center in New York City, said that although the *Alison D.* ruling is a devastating blow to lesbian and gay rights, he sees ways to move beyond the court's conservatism. "Our next step is to fight this in the legislature," he told *GCN*. "We need to pressure our elected officials to expand the definition of family—give legal standing to non-biological parents," said Steinman.

Alison D.'s lawyer said that despite the ruling's harmful effects, she believes it will motivate people to become involved in the fight for lesbian and gay rights. "It's hard losses like this one that tend to motivate people to recognize and understand our oppression," said Ettelbrick.

"This is a reality check on where we are in

regard to lesbian and gay family rights, and we need to keep fighting for these rights despite how vulnerable decisions like this make us feel," Ettelbrick concluded. "Lesbians are not going to stop having children, and at some point, either through another case or the legislature, this decision will be overturned."

—filed from Boston

Budget cuts

Continued from page 3

Cronin, who is also a member of the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, predicted cuts in the General Relief, Medicaid, and rent and fuel assistance programs will drastically affect PWAs.

The General Relief income assistance program provides financial assistance to PWAs from the time they become unable to work to the time they receive Supplementary Security Income (SSI) or Social Security assistance, often a period of between eight months to a year.

To qualify for General Relief income assistance, a doctor must certify that an individual has a physical or mental incapability that prevents him or her from working. Weld envisions a more restrictive qualification process as a way to cut General Relief expenditures.

Cronin argues that such a change would eliminate the advantage of immediate General Relief income benefits. People with AIDS would have no financial assistance to rely on while they await approval for General Relief, SSI, or Social Security assistance.

Cronin also said that subjecting people to tighter eligibility standards will be expensive, cutting into General Relief funding that could be spent to assist more people.

"People have to get food, shelter and clothes one way or another," Kessler said. "If they can't get these things through General Relief assistance, they may have to steal them."

'It looks very bleak'

While Weld's budget proposals to date have made little mention of Medicaid cuts, Cronin said he fears legislators will turn to this program in order to make substantial reductions. At stake are Optional Medicaid Services, which include coverage for clinic services, prescription drugs, transportation, private duty nursing services, personal care in a recipient's home, and home- and community-based services.

"You always have to double figures when you talk about Medicaid reductions, reflecting the federal reimbursements," Cronin cautioned. The \$500 million legislators might try to save in cutting Medicaid optional services could translate into a \$1 billion dollar loss of actual services.

"Fifty percent of people with AIDS depend on Medicaid to access their health care," Cronin said. "It is the only chance for people who are poor to stay healthy."

Even PWAs whose incomes are above the national poverty line find their financial resources quickly spent on costly treatments. Once their astronomical health bills have put them 40 percent below the poverty line, they have "spent down" and are eligible for Medicaid.

"If you are purchasing AZT and you are on a \$100 spend-down program," Cronin said, "you usually qualify for Medicaid after one or two purchases of the drug. AIDS makes you poor."

Without Medicaid, many PWAs would have to be hospitalized before they qualified for medical cost coverage.

"They [PWAs] can't get private insurance," said Michael Miller, associate director of Health Care for All, a health advocacy coalition. "Those people would no longer be Medicaid eligible, period," he told *GCN*. "The only thing available would be the Hospital Free Care Pool."

Kessler cited the difficulties that cuts in rent and fuel assistance will cause. "Finding affordable housing will be much more difficult. High oil bills often exceed rents, which are already exclusionary," he said, adding, "People with AIDS are vulnerable. It looks very bleak."

"The cuts will end up costing the state more money," said Cronin. "People get sick anyway, and they will eventually require hospitalization and treatment at a far greater expense."

ACT UP, AAC and other Massachusetts AIDS agencies plan to hold a demonstration at the State House May 23. Kessler said it will be "an educational fair to explain to the media and legislators just what those cuts mean."

"People have to realize that there are more things at stake than the Commonwealth's bond rating," said Miller. "These are people's lives." □

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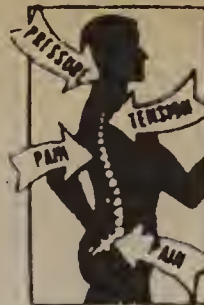
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Unions are queer

by Harneen Chernow

A lesbian chronicle
of coming out as a
union activist

In 1984 when I went to work as a secretary at Boston University (BU), I had no idea that the next years of my life would be committed to working in the labor movement. Shortly after beginning my employment at BU's School of Social Work, I was approached by a union activist to sign a card and join the union, District 65/United Auto Workers. Although I had never been in a union, it took only a short period of time working for BU before I was ready to jump in and become an activist in my department.

It was also contract negotiations time and a group of us lesbian and gay union sisters and brothers decided to get together and organize a lesbian and gay workers caucus. Our goals were to get the words "sexual orientation" added to our contract's non-discrimination clause and to try and get domestic partnership benefits for lesbian and gay workers and non-traditional families.

Because BU's president John Silber (the one time Mass. gubernatorial candidate) was known for his homophobia as well as his union busting, we knew any victory in this arena was a long shot. In addition to implementing a widespread campaign to educate the membership about these issues, our strategy included bringing David Scondras, openly-gay Boston City Council member to the bargaining table as well as using the then-recently passed Boston Human Rights Ordinance that made it illegal to discriminate against lesbian and gay workers. It was quite an exciting time to be a queer union member working at BU.

During the negotiations process we agreed to give up our demand for domestic partnership benefits. The sexual orientation language, however, was something we held onto until the end. Once it became apparent that Silber would refuse to include the words "sexual orientation," we agreed to a counter-offer: a new non-discrimination clause that stated that the contract would abide by all federal, state and city laws and ordinances. This gave employees union protection if discriminated against on the basis of any category listed in a law or ordinance, which in Boston included sexual orientation.

This struggle was certainly helped by the fact that three of the eight negotiating team members were lesbians or gay men. Also of great importance was the organizing our straight union sisters and brothers did to educate the work force and make the struggle for lesbian and gay rights a union-wide fight. This experience taught me that lesbian and gay liberation went hand in hand with union organization and the empowerment of working people.

Because my entrance to the labor movement came through organizing for lesbian and gay rights and benefits, I had an extremely positive view of the role unions could play in guaranteeing rights for homosexual workers. Unions can provide an immediate avenue for retribution at work—quite different from the process of pursuing a costly and drawn-out case with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination or the Attorney General's office. Once I became a union organizer, I quickly learned that other lesbian and gay workers did not make the same connection between having a union and having protection against discrimination based on sexuality. After all, most of us have grown up in an anti-union culture with an individualistic work ethic held up as the norm, the idea that people should get ahead by themselves without working collectively.

In 1987 I decided to facilitate a workshop at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival for Lesbians in Unions. For some unknown reason, the conference organizers scheduled our workshop to meet in the same place and immediately following a workshop called Lesbians Who Wear Blue Suits—a workshop for lesbian professionals. It was no surprise that the transition from their workshop to ours did not go smoothly.

As the attendees for the union workshop started to walk up to the site, some of the "professionals" started to bait us about the space, saying shouldn't we negotiate with them for the space, and asking us if we were going to picket, or maybe even go on strike to make them leave. We were mostly shocked at their attitude and at what they clearly felt was acceptable behavior. It left many of us questioning, not for the first time, our alliances: class and union alliance vs. our lesbian community alliance.

Organizing lesbian/gay workers

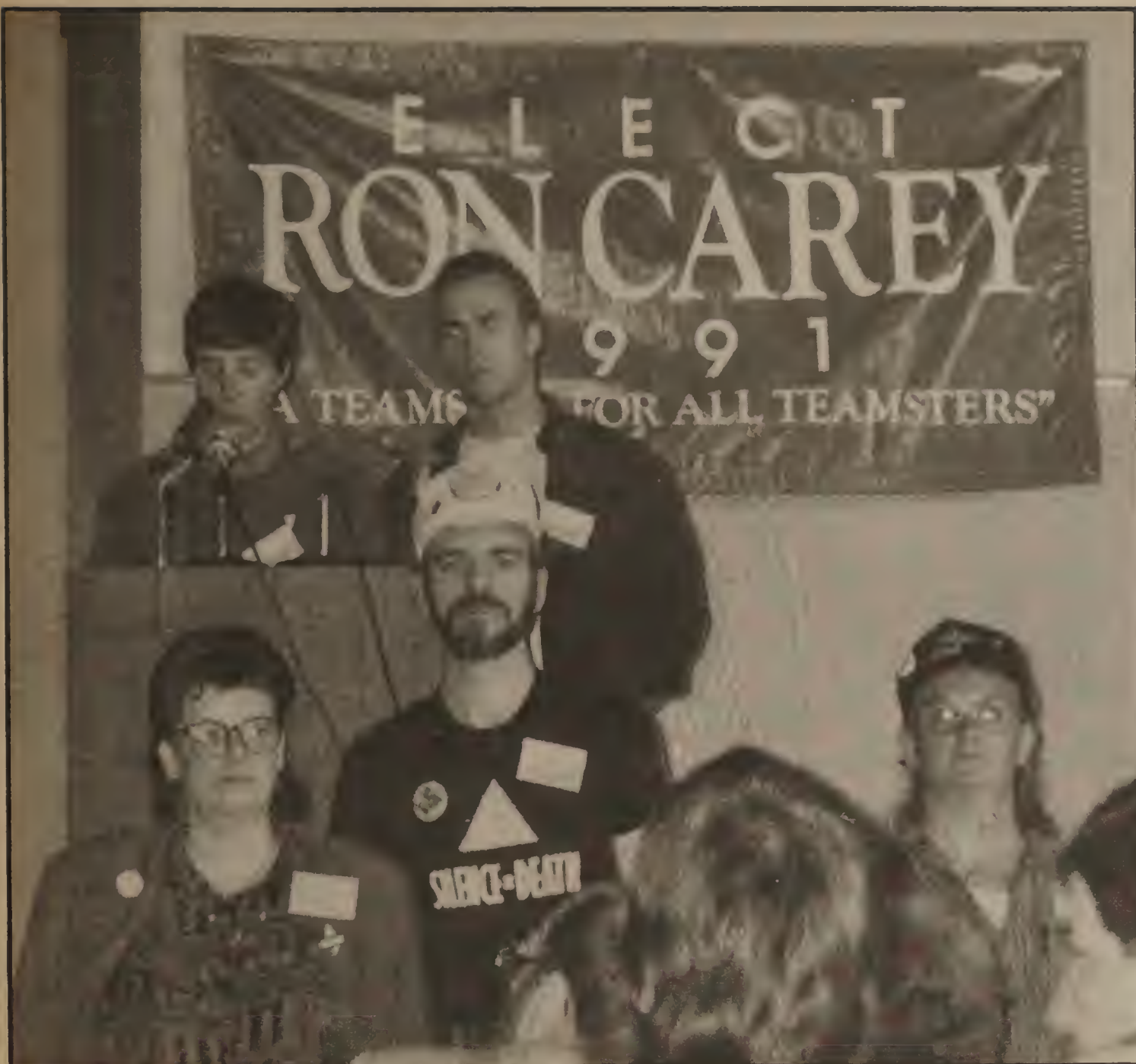
I was still operating under the assumption, perhaps naively, that once other queers were exposed to a pro-union, pro-worker perspective, they would come to a conclusion similar to mine. After becoming a staff organizer for District 65/UAW, I found out I was wrong. I was assigned to assist employees interested in organizing

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themselves into a union. One group I worked with was the clerical and para-professional staff at the Berklee College of Music.

Being a lesbian union organizer at Berklee was quite a unique experience. One of the top managers in the personnel department was a lesbian, and many of the staff were lesbians or gay men. Although I felt the dyke manager provided a particular contradiction, I was excited at the relatively large number of lesbian/gay workers. I thought that gay and lesbian workers would strongly support the union in the face of the AIDS crisis, the subsequent rise in employment discrimination against homosexuals, and the general need for protection against arbitrary work changes. This campaign took place in 1987, before the Gay & Lesbian Civil Rights Bill had been passed in Massachusetts, and non-union lesbian and gay workers had very little protection.

The lesbian employees at Berklee came through with strong support for the union both as activists in the campaign and as "yes" votes in the election (except for the lesbian manager in Personnel who took an active role in running the anti-union campaign and discouraging workers from voting for the union). The gay men, however, mostly voted against the union. Was it a lack of class consciousness? Was it a strong attachment to maintaining an individualistic work life? As a lesbian organizer, I felt I did the best I could to make the connection between having a union and having basic rights as lesbians and gay men. But something had failed to transfer. The union lost at the Berklee College of Music by three votes.



Members from Gay and Lesbian Caucus speak at labor banquet

Queer trade unionists organize

In the face of these and many other isolated victories and setbacks, lesbian and gay labor activists began organizing themselves into a stronger political movement. Various queer labor organizations started up to address the lack of union awareness in the lesbian/gay community and to deal with homophobia in the labor movement.

In New York City, the Lesbian and Gay Labor Network (LGLN), emerged around the Coors beer boycott to keep Coors from coming to the lesbian and gay bars. LGLN along with a group from California, organized the first-ever lesbian/gay labor reception at the AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington, D.C., during the 1987 March on Washington. Over 600 labor activists packed the event, among them many straight labor leaders who came to offer their greetings and support. In Boston, lesbian and gay labor activists who had been meeting as a support group began to organize into a more activist organization. Thus, the Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network (GALLAN) was born.

In addition to participating in public events, lesbian/gay union members have fought and won some of the earliest struggles for domestic partnership benefits in their contracts. Workers at the *Village Voice* receive health coverage for spouse equivalents as an outcome of contract negotiations. The Committee of Interns and Residents Staff Union in New York City was able to negotiate a joint hospital-union health plan that covers spousal equivalents. Public sector workers in union locals throughout the country have won the right to take bereavement and sick leave for members of the same house. Many other unions are attempting to negotiate for access to additional kinds of domestic partnership benefits such as pension plans, credit unions, and discounted merchandise or services offered by the employer.

Coming out in the labor movement

While lesbian and gay workers have become more and more of a visible force within the labor movement, we still remain invisible to some of our progressive union brothers and sisters. This proved true at the recent *Labor Notes* conference held in Detroit April 19-21, 1991. Every two years *Labor Notes* (a monthly publication) organizes a conference that draws over 1000 progressive activists from North and Central America, and other countries around the world. These activists come together to share their experiences and strategies and to plan for the future of the labor movement.

The theme of *Labor Notes* is to put the "movement" back in the labor movement. Struggles typically highlighted in the publication include rank and file insurgency movements and democratic struggles within unions to make them more accountable to the membership. For the past three conferences, lesbian and gay workers have been pressuring *Labor Notes* to acknowledge our existence and contributions to the labor movement, and to recognize that we are another oppressed group not fully accepted by our unions.

It is always difficult to deal with "progressives" who won't extend their analysis to groups they deem irrelevant. "Our interests are connected and related," said Patti Roberts, a conference attendee, labor educator and the Acting Director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights "People do not come to being pro-union from reading the newspaper. Lesbian and gay union members and activists who are out there organizing the lesbian and gay community can only help strengthen the labor movement."

A large number of lesbians and gay men came from around the country to this year's *Labor Notes* conference. This was partially due to the large number of queers in leadership positions in unions, and partially due to an increased outreach effort on the part of GALLAN to bring more friends. To help with this outreach, I organized activists from other parts of the country to be part of a workshop called "Organizing for Domestic Partnership Benefits." Lesbian labor activists from San Francisco, Oakland, New York City and Boston joined the panel and presented domestic partnership benefits work they are doing in their unions around this issue.

In addition to the panel, we had a Gay and Lesbian Workers Caucus. We advocated for a time slot during the first night of the conference, so that we could get to know each other early on. Each new person that walked into the caucus entered the room with a smile, as if they were finally coming home after searching for family throughout the evening.

There were folks from all over the country, Canada and Mexico. There were nurses, mail handlers, electricians, secretaries, steel workers, state workers and bus drivers. Most of us were rank and file workers, the majority of whom were previous or current elected union leadership. And many of us were out in our unions and in our work places.

This caucus differed from lesbian and gay caucuses held at earlier *Labor Notes* conferences since many of the attendees were active in both lesbian and gay issues in

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their unions and in the lesbian and gay community. Unlike previous conferences (where many of the lesbian and gay workers were not out to the co-workers they had come with), a majority of this group was out to everyone. It felt exciting and powerful to be sitting in a room of creative, talented and committed trade unionists who were all queer.

Many individuals reported that they had started lesbian and gay committees in their unions and were actively working on addressing homophobia at work and in their union. There was also discussion of the contradictions we face living and working in two distinct communities. Janis Borchardt, a Greyhound bus driver, vice-president of ATU Local 1225 and lesbian activist from San Francisco, has been coordinating the Greyhound/Trailways bus strike for Northern California and Nevada since the workers went out in March, 1990. Part of the strike strategy has been doing outreach to the lesbian and gay community to honor the bus

boycott. Borchardt stated, "This past summer we brought a large contingent of straight drivers to march at the Gay Day Parade to express solidarity. Unfortunately, after the parade was over hundreds of lesbian and gay men crossed right through our picket line to get on Greyhound/Trailways buses to go home. As a lesbian, it was an extremely demoralizing moment."

Members from the two active lesbian/gay labor groups—LGLN and GALLAN—discussed activities in their cities. While LGLN's recent work has focused on organizing gay/lesbian committees in unions to push for domestic partnership benefits, putting out a newsletter and publishing their book, *Pride At Work*, (reviewed in *GCN*, Nov. 3-9, 1990) GALLAN's work has focused more on organizing and education within both the lesbian and gay and labor movements around issues that have significance to both communities. In 1990, for example, GALLAN organized unions and labor activists to sponsor and walk in the From All Walks Of Life AIDS walkathon.

Even though there were exciting reports of organizing throughout the labor movement in North and Central America, there was a clear lack of ongoing information sharing and communication. We therefore decided to launch an international organization called Lavender Labor—International Lesbian and Gay Labor Network. As Andrea Davis, a nurse from SEIU Local 616 in Oakland, Calif., put it, "We need to look beyond passing individual resolutions around homophobia at our union conferences. Having a national network will give us a visible and necessary everyday presence within the labor movement at large."

Goals for the network include sharing news, information, organizing struggles and contract language. "For me, organizing this network is very important," said Daniel Cohen, a member of Voz Hermana, an AIDS activist group doing work with unions in Mexico. "I was unaware of the amount of work lesbian and gay men are doing in the union movement in North America. It's important for us in Mexico to see this so we are inspired to start doing similar work back home."

Members expressed interest in organizing a conference for lesbian and gay trade unionists to come together to meet, exchange information and set a more detailed agenda. The network is also designed to help legitimize the relevance of unions to lesbian and gay workers and to help get news about labor struggles out to the lesbian and gay community.

To initiate this process we decided to approach the *Labor Notes* staff about letting us speak for two minutes at the Saturday night conference banquet. Because the keynote speaker was Teamsters presidential insurgency candidate Ron Carey, we knew the hall would be full of teamsters and other labor friends representing the more mainstream current in the movement. These were the exact folks we wanted to talk to. Some of us went off to approach the *Labor Notes* staff and some of us went off to write the statement.

Not surprisingly we met with extreme resistance from *Labor Notes*. And although "not enough time" was given as the official reason for denying us space at the banquet, the *Labor Notes* staff appeared fearful that allowing us to speak might alienate much of their traditional base of support: white, straight, men from industrial sector trade unions in the Midwest. Too bad.

Labor Notes proposed that instead of speaking Saturday night we speak at the Sunday morning Women's Plenary, or at the summary section of the conference Sunday afternoon. It was unlikely that the brothers and sisters we most wanted to reach would be attending either of those events, so we stuck to our original proposal and continued negotiating—or pressuring—*Labor Notes* staff to let us speak.

Many of the Caucus members were furious at the disrespect with which our request had been met and were ready to organize an action. Some folks wanted to rush the podium and take over the microphone and were even organizing straight supporters to chant "let them speak" if they saw us moving toward the stage.

"Here we are at a progressive conference with a progressive organization and we are having to fight for time," said Andrea Davis. "It's amazing that we represent such a threat to them that they don't want to let us speak."

Finally, after some very difficult and heated discussions, the conference organizer told us that we "could have our two minutes, but that we'd never be invited back to *Labor Notes* again." As if we were invited in the first place! He eventually returned to vaguely apologize for what had been said.

We decided to have two Caucus members, Tess Ewing, a GALLAN member from Boston, and Scott Beveridge, a member of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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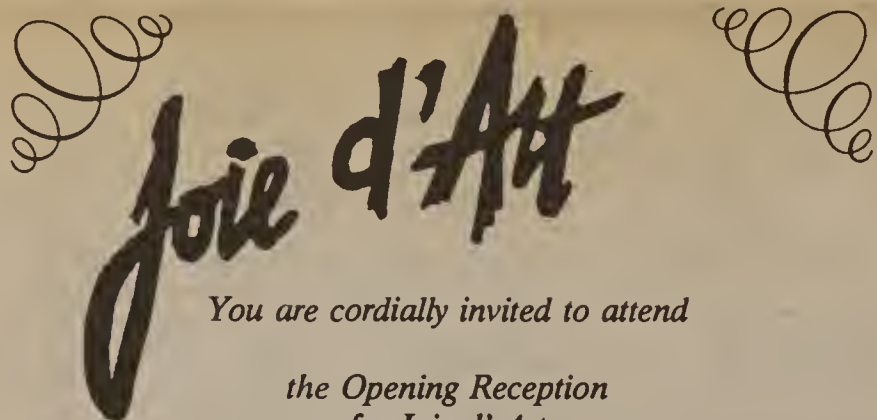
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Gay Male Health Educator,
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Fag Rag

Continued from backpage

then offered (threatened) to appear in person to appeal our gay rage case; consequently, *Fag Rag* received grants in the fall of '74, '75, '76, '77 and the spring of '80. But the winds of reaction were gathering. In 1976, a new CCLM director had to fight the NEA for funding of little mags. "One of the reasons we were given," he wrote, for the attempt to cut off CCLM's grant, was that its participatory program "created too much trouble and turmoil among the membership."

Fag Rag questioned some of the literary standards of the small presses no less than the grand presses. They lived by a system of mutual back-scratching: "You support our grant/publication/whatever, we'll support you." In order to counter some of these politics, *Fag Rag* adopted a rule of not printing reviews or interviews since they were too often disguised advertisements or, at best, celebrity self-promotion.

That rigorously pure stand soon gave way to our sponsoring an affiliate publication, the *Boston Gay Review*. They were two independent rags but they overlapped and the initial issues of *BGR* were funded entirely by *Fag Rag*. On its own the *BGR* sold slowly. I asked the manager at the East Side Bookstore (which was then selling about a hundred *Fag Rags*) why they hadn't sold a single issue of *BGR*. "The word 'gay?'" I asked; "No," he answered, "the 'Boston' kills it."

Boston Gay Review published many reviews of lesbian and gay books. The publication set a high standard in reviews of poetry, which have only recently been equaled by *The James White Review* from Minnesota. And while the CCLM shut off *Fag Rag* for causing too much "trouble and turmoil," they funded *BGR*.

The group that put out *BGR* not only overlapped with *Fag Rag*, but the two also overlapped with the Good Gay Poets group. William Burroughs and John Giorno had done a benefit reading in Boston for *Fag Rag*, which had led to the publication of a volume of my own and of Sal Farinella's *San Francisco Experience*. That book had then led to John Wieners' *Behind the State Capitol* in 1975. In 1976, the Good Gay Poets received a grant directly from the NEA for publishing six books of poetry. That was followed in 1978 with another NEA grant to *Fag Rag* for the publication of Arthur Evans's *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture*, which had appeared serially in *Fag Rag*.

One of the major problems with government grants and of government surveillance has been the tracking. Even CCLM had to report in 1974: "We've been audited four times, and we are an open book to the [National] Endowment [for the Arts], the New York State Council on the Arts, the Internal Revenue Service, the General Accounting Office, the New York State Department of Social Services and the New York State Attorney General's Office." Files! Files! These not only generate information for government agencies but they also train people to think in terms of double entry bookkeeping. Andy Warhol's clever exploitation of the government demand for monitoring his life resulted in his delightfully name-filled and profit-making diaries. But the vitiated qualities of our lives and our literatures are revealed in his telling pages; the powers that be would have us all become accountants for the Office of Budget and Management.

Whatever the merits of grants, government funds for *Fag Rag* ceased quite abruptly with the election of Ronald Reagan. Reagan simplified the NEA so that artists could clearly identify the government as their out-and-out enemy. All magazines and artists should be self-supporting. To become too dependent (whether on government or foundation or spouse or patron) weakens efforts to become self-supporting. *Fag Rag* for better or worse depends on the voluntary labor of its members and on its readers; publication for the fun of it. The *Fag Rag* #27/28 editorial defended "self-indulgence, living our lives for ourselves, following our own desires, passions, feelings. The opposite to self-indulgence is denial, the theme of all gay oppression."

Fag Rag's relationship to prisons has in many ways defined the publication; we have not said no to grant support; we have not said no to individuals who have donated money to keep us afloat. But we have appealed beyond them to a wider audience, which too many other publications avoid. In every issue we have published writings from prisoners; and the paper is sent free to those incarcerated in prison, mental hospitals or the armed forces.

In 1972, among our earliest demands was that "All lesbians or faggots now imprisoned

for any 'sex crime' (except rape) should be released immediately from brigs, mental hospitals or prisons. They should be compensated at \$2.50 an hour for each hour of confinement and all records of their incarcerations should be destroyed."

The group has taken up the cases of many prisoners such as Eddie Rastellini, who was arrested in 1970 on trumped up boy-love charges, and then killed in prison under so-called "suspicious conditions." The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts refused even to consider his case and another more conservative gay group maintained that Rastellini was where he belonged.

The link between the sex radicals of *Fag Rag*, the movement of Chairman Mao and the more acceptable gay movement is now epitomized in Mike Riegler who has dedicated years to the Red Book Prison Project, the *GCN* Lesbian/Gay Prisoner Project and the *Fag Rag*. (He was also *GCN's* office manager for over a decade.) Prisoners are not likely soon to take a cruise to the Caribbean, take in a play in New York or buy a new waterfront condominium on the Pacific coast. You don't need a market researcher to tell you that they won't buy many cases of Chilean wines, nor a new car. *Fag Rag* doesn't pretend to "help" prisoners, but to provide a place where this gay voice can speak and be heard by other prisoners. Freddie Greenfield jumped from parole onto the collective; for ten years he was poetry editor and his own book *Were You Always a Criminal?* was published by *Fag Rag* just before his death in 1989. At one COSMEP meeting in Philadelphia at a workshop on prisoner writings, one editor complained of the "poor quality" of writings from prisoners and said if they just sent in something good it could be published. Half facetiously, I answered, "If you want to raise the quality of prison-writing then you should do some time." □

Unions

Continued from centerspread

SEIU in Toronto, deliver our formal two-minute presentation and have the rest of us lesbians and gay men join them at the podium or stand up at our tables. When the time came for the Gay & Lesbian Caucus to speak, many of us were quite nervous. Here we were coming out to over 1000 trade unionists from around the world.

When first introduced, we got a mild round of applause. People were obviously wondering what was happening and were curious as to who we were and what we looked like. But as our Caucus statement was read, the crowd became increasingly more vocal in their support.

For those of us standing in front together, it was an exhilarating and emotional moment. And from what many of us heard afterwards, it was the highlight of the conference. We were joined at our Lesbian & Gay Reception that night by many of our straight supporters. Labor allies, particularly from the Boston area, came to express their support and excitement at what we had done. Other lesbian and gay workers whom we had yet to meet also came to the reception, now willing to reach out and connect with the rest of us. The closet door was finally opened at *Labor Notes*.

Organizing in the future

The struggle with *Labor Notes* helped further solidify our commitment to build the Lavender Labor network, and to continue our educational work within the labor movement. The first activity will be publishing a newsletter for international distribution. Caucus members were also encouraged to return to their communities and begin organizing local or regional networks of queer labor activists. LGLN member Vivienne Freund summed it up by saying, "It was a great eye-opener to come to the *Labor Notes* conference. We're telling our straight brothers and sisters that we can share our organizing strategies with them; we demand our place at the table."

Coalition politics will work only when we examine our biases and ignorance of other movements and peoples. At a time when divisions in the lesbian and gay community seem to reflect the political fragmentation found in society at large, we must look to potential allies to build our movement. Unions can be such an ally and those of us who are activists in them welcome our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers to sign up and come out! The labor movement is an exciting place to do gay politics. □

Lavender Labor be can reached c/o GALLAN, P.O. BOX 1450, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.



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Dai R. Thompson is seeking the whereabouts of John Alexander Stewart Jr. DOB 12/12/71. John, please let me know how you are doing. Love, Dai. GCN Box 699

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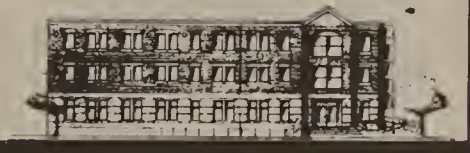
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CLASSIFIEDS

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CAMBRIDGEPORT

LF seeks same for 3 flr rent-controlled house. Backyard, driveway, near T. Other species welcome. \$283 for bedroom and study. Call 661-6771

NATICK

LF 35 seeks 2 responsible LF to share house. 4 BR, 2 BA, Deck, pool, yard, off st. parking, washer, dryer and more \$375/mo incl. all. Avail. 1 May 508-653-3766 (41)

SUMMER SUBLET AVAILABLE

\$300 plus util. fully furnished rm w/ TV in gay home available May 1st thru Sept./Oct. Full use of kitchen, laundry rm, living rm. On street parking, 1 block from T. Red line, Shawmut stop, Dorchester. Call Frank, 426-4469 days 10 AM-4PM.

Lovely apartment, Milton-Dor. T & expressway. 2 LFs, 36 & 38 (anthropologist and writer) No smoke/drugs. Dog/cat, no more animals. \$270+ 825-2752

SOMERVILLE

Two lesbians 33 & 44; 3 cats seek lesbian to share spacious apartment between Porter and Davis convenient 4 bedrooms porches W/D backyard. We are friendly and independent. No more pets. No smokers. Available April 1. Rent \$325+ 625-4298

BL seeks woman of color to share sunny, convenient Cambridge semi-coop house with hardwood floors and back yard! Must be neat and responsible. \$315+ 868-4907 (32)

FITCHBURG AREA

Wanted: nonsmoking L to share country farmhouse 50 miles from Boston. Wood heat, garden space, piano, ping pong. Pets negotiable. \$300. Barter possible. 508-386-7737 (32)

SOMERVILLE

2LF, 2 cats seek L/Bi F for homey 3BR in Winter Hill. Big, sunny spaces, porches, parking. Friendly, independent living, drug/smoke free. \$300+, 5/1. 623-5535.

JAMAICA PLAIN

2 sober non-smkg GMs seek same to share large furn. 7rm apt with own unfurn BR w/d near T \$275+ utils share expenses call 524-7705 (38)

Somerville, 3F, friendly and radical seek 1F, any race, any sexual preference, for coop. No smokers or furry pets, 202+, 623-5768

Cleveland Circle basement apartment seeks UNTIDY female housemate, 23+. Independent, responsible, considerate, respect privacy. Near 3 T lines! \$240 includes heat. Leave message 739-6566 now. (30)

N ALLSTON

1M/1f seek resp. prof. person to share furnished 3 bedroom apartment in 2 family house near Harvard/ #66 bus. Washer/Dryer parking. \$325/month 254-1955 (35)

Ecofeminist co-op with passion for popcorn, recycling shared meals seek L/Bi F. \$330+ Near Davis Square. Available now. Call 628-0878 or 623-0703. No pets, drugs, smoke. Min alcohol. (23)

3 LF seek 4th to share warm/friendly home. Close to Orange/Green line. Semi co-op. We have a dog. \$225+ woodstove, woodfloor, plants. Call 522-9351 (34)

2 LF seek M/F roommate 25+, near Orange line. W/D, DW, yard. Seek responsible non-smoker, must like cats. \$320+ utilities. Pagan inquiries welcome. 628-7744 (34)

WOLLASTON BEACH QUINCY

GWM/Black Lab sk quiet responsible GM to share 2 bdrm apt. on beach short walk to red line working fireplace, hdwd flrs, washer/dryer, dishwasher, parking, much more. \$325.00 plus 1/2 utilities. Available now. 770-1197 Larry leave message. (38)

QUIET ST. IN JP

3 LF's seek LF for semi-coop 250+ Low utils. Near T. Great sunny house! Friendly, funky folks, 983-0599 Avail. May 1st poss. earlier (38)

SOMERVILLE/TEELE SQUARE

LF seeks L for sunny, spacious 5 rm. apartment. Porches, close to Davis Sq. T. No smoke, pets, drugs. \$275/mo. plus sec. Call 628-3216 (23)

Roommate wanted for large, sunny 2 bedroom, near Tufts, \$350+, no smoking, no pets 776-1087 (43)

HAPPY HOUSEMATE WANTED

GF seeks GF/GM for bright and spacious apt. in Brookline 3bedrms Living room dining room EIK. Two Large decks. Off Street Parking Hardwood floors \$325 Plus Utilities 734-1117 (34)

Two LF looking for lykable-dykeable lesbo 3BR house in JP. 250+, 3 cats, semi-veg, smoke + drug free, near T, call Susan 522-5123 Ashley 524-9961 (34)

Dorchester-Two political lesbians one Jewish one Jockish want LF to share house with large yard and porch. One block from Ashmont T 282-0046 (34)

SUMMER RENTALS

WELLFLEET, CAPE COD

Garden apartment, steps to bay beach. Sleeps two. \$400/wk. Please call 1-508-349-6947. (43)

JP SUBLET

May 15-Aug 31. Great LF household-friendly and fun women only!! Pleasant, furnished room, 1/2 bath. T convenient-Forest Hills \$210+ util. (negotiable) 522-6148 (43)

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PUBLICATIONS

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WOMEN'S REVIEW OF BOOKS

monthly review of current feminist writing. Since 1983. Our readers span the U.S., Canada, and abroad. Subscriptions: \$15/U.S., \$18/Canada, \$25/institutions. Free sample on request. THE WOMEN'S REVIEW, Wellesley Women's Research Center, Wellesley, MA 02181.(ex)

LESBIAN CONTRADICTION

A Journal of Irreverent Feminism. Quarterly of commentary, analysis, reviews, cartoons & humor by and for women who agree to disagree-who are still political, but not necessarily correct. Sample \$1.50/sub. \$6 more if/less if. LesCon, 584 Castro, No. 236G, SF, CA 94114. (18.35)

GAYELLOW PAGES

Accommodations, AIDS/HIV resources, bars, bookstores, various businesses, health care, legal services, organizations, publications, religious groups, switchboards, therapists, travel agents, & much more, for gay women and men.
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US/CANADA. Canada and USA for women & men. City by city information for all US States, Canadian Provinces, and the US Virgin Islands, plus nationwide resources including headquarters of national organizations and caucuses; publications; mail order companies, etc. \$12.00; outside N. America \$17 (airmail)

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY. NY & NJ; separate Women's Section; Manhattan bar notes by Jerry Fitzpatrick. \$5.00; outside N. America \$8 (airmail)

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VACATIONS

MERMAID INN FT LAUDERDALE BEACH

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PRISONERS SEEKING FRIENDS

LAYOUT DATE: 5/9/91

Books not bars: Free books on nonviolence, feminism, social change and all that good stuff for interested prisoners. Write for a catalogue: Todd Peterson/New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Ave, Phil, PA 19143.

Loving, good-hearted, Interested in dancing, art, computers. Shy, feminine, will write anybody inside or out. Very lonely! Allan Shelfft, #509290, Houghes Unit, Rt. 2, Box 4400, Gatesville TX 76597

Gay man desperate to talk with someone who understands and to whom I can talk openly. Please write: William Chaffant, D-95360, Box 29, Represa CA95671

Dear Oliver Clark In TDC, I received your letter but I was moved from Chicago to a prison in Dallas. I wrote to the jail but the letter was returned stating you had left. I loved the letter and need to stay in touch! Please write me and include some address that will forward my letters to you. My new address: James Redmond, #03277-045, Box 9000, Seagoville, TX 75159

19-year-old dripping wet, bisexual, would love to hear from all open-minded persons. I want to share myself with you. Write T.P Sunny Barr, #287436, Box 520, WSP 4-B-23, Walla Walla WA 99362

Artist, into poetry, computers and chess will answer all correspondence. Write Lewis Bullock, #71817, Unit 30-D, Parchman MS 38738

Cold time so hard/I need warmth deep down/This lonely bard/Wears a weeping frown/I need a friend/A friend and lover/Two men to send/Love to each other. Write Charlie Klapperich 7407900, 2500 Westgate, Pendleton OR 97801

I made parole at the end of November but have no place to go. Can anyone help me find a place to stay and a job? Will respond to all offers, but prefer going to New Mexico, Minnesota or Calif. Thank you. Paul Kimberly Decker, 185-353, 4D-20, 11781 St. Rt, 762, Orient OH 43146

Looking for a relationship like beauty and the beast. I'm beauty, looking for the beast. I go by Baby Girl or Tracy. Write Thomas White, 248166-0-53, Apalachee CI, box 699W, Sneads, FL 32460

I love the outdoors, cooking, am now studying law. Love to meet a friend. I like a little S& M, but not the real hard stuff. Troy Lee Webb, 6410072, 2500 Westgate, Pendleton, OR 97801

Gay male looking for serious relationship with Mr. Right. I love cross-dressing, cooking, traveling, a little TLC. Larry Beasley, 7036560, 2500 Westgate, Pendleton OR 97801

Sincere, shy GM will write anyone who desires a lasting friendship. I like music, beach quiet evenings. Race unimportant. Jim Fitzgerald, 98743, Blue Grass Unit 309, MAC, St. Mary, KY 40063-9999. Can't write prisoners.

GM, loves to read and loves the outdoors, am affectionate and warm. Write John S. Craft, 900145, Evergreen H-10, Box 900, Shelton WA 98584

I've been in prison for 9 years, with another 11 to go. am looking for a penpal of any sex. Robert Riffey, C-66052, Box 4000, S-223-L, CMF South, Vacaville CA

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"TO ALL THOSE IN AND OUT OF PRISON, WHO FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE"

Alexander Berkman,

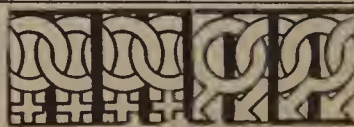
Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist

Women Seeking Friends



Lonely female looking to correspond with someone and to be a friend and maybe more? If you're the one, c'mon and write; I'm a doll. Please hurry. Brenda Riley, 22322395, 1479 Collins Ave, Marysville OH 43040

Quiet, GBF likes the outdoors, music, crocheting, macrame, ceramics, reading, sincere friendships only. Gale Richardson, 27487 Latham A 213-L, Frontera CA91720



95696-4000

GM into camping, outdoors, looking for friends, can write other prisoners. No games. John D. DeHaas, 7766282, Pendleton, OR 97801

Body-builder who loves sex looking for a real friend. Will answer all who reply. Anthony Ettaro, B-049669, Dorm FS-41B, Tomoka Corr. Inst, 3950 Tiger Bay Rd, Daytona Beach FL 32124

I've got 53 years to go and need some penpals to write. Please send a letter to Dale R. Diehl 187-928, Box 120, MCI, Lebanon, OH 45036

BGM, extrovert, loving, and ionely. Seeking to correspond with anyone of any race. Carlos Newbern, Box 515, N26214, Joliet IL 60432

NAMBLA member would like to hear from others with similar interests. Will answer all. Stanley Murphy, Box 2769347, 3405 Deer Park Dr, SE, Salem OR 97310

Dear Oliver Clark, send full address to me so I can write you back. Joe Hopper, Box 78426, Florence, AZ 85232.

GM, ex-Vet, in for a long stretch. No head games. I don't want stamps, money, or charity, just quality penpals. Radical, sincere, profusive writer. Will answer all letters. Charles Jackson, E-64 116902, Box 500, Olustee FL 32072

GM would like to meet someone that cares and understands people. I am a bookkeeper and into photography. Shaun Jordan, BI-8942, Box 200, Camp Hill, PA 17001.

I enjoy surfing and love to have a good time. I really hope to hear from somebody because it gets real lonely with nobody out there knowing you're alive. Michael Brandon, D58655, Box W-3B-3-37, Represa, CA 95671

Country boy new to the gay scene interested in writing, rodeos, would love to exchange letters all who write. JAMES Brewer, 480728, Rt. 4, Box 1200, Rosharon, TX 77583

Half-Mexican, half-white man into collecting post cards from around the world, looking for penpals. Charles Vidal, C-21241, Box 8101 #1235, San Luis Obispo, CA 93409

GM needs to make friends, find some roots, someone special to give a mea chance. Getting out soon. Affectionate and sincere. Write HC Marquez, 129921, Box 97, McAlester, OK 74502

GM seeking penpal to create a friendship or lover. I like soft rock, poetry, sports and movies. Write JayZack Joel Relmer, 937619, S-Wing-H-18, Box 520, Walla Walla, WA 99362

CALENDAR

19 Sunday, Jamaica Plain ♦ Deb Margolin: "Of All the Nerve." A founding member of Split Britches. Emerson Studio Theatre, 69 Brimmer St. 8 p.m. Write to Next Stage, 64 Wyman St. Tickets \$10 advance, \$12 at door. Tickets: 497-1118. Info: 524-0971.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged! Please specify if event is or is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings. All listings must be typed. Please note that listings are printed only as space allows; we regret that we can not print every submission. No phone calls, please!

Phone numbers listed are in the 617 area code, and non-major cities are in Massachusetts, unless otherwise noted.

11 SATURDAY

Lincoln ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club Lincoln to Harvard Bike Ride. 44 mi. ride on scenic roads. Info: Patty 666-1305.

Worcester ♦ Worcester Lesbian and Gay Pride Rally. United Congregational Church. For more information 755-0005 or 757-9575

Vermont ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club Beginner's Backpack on the Long Trail. 9.8 mi., good for beginners. Info: Mike (603) 644-7658.

Nashua, NH ♦ Workshop: "Consumer's Guide to Competent and Ethical Counseling." Spons. by Gay Info Line of N.H. Time and info: (603) 595-2650.

Dorchester ♦ Dorchester GALA Goes to New York Juke Box. Free admission; call Barry 288-1847.

Watertown ♦ DOB Women's Tennis. All abilities. Free. Courts behind Arsenal Mall, Arsenal St. 9 a.m. 628-1038.

Boston ♦ Bicycling Lesbians Around Boston Mystery Ride. 10:30 a.m. Info: Sue 776-3916.

Newburyport ♦ Bird Watching at Plum Island with North Shore G/L Alliance. Bring a duck stamp if you have one. Meet 2 p.m., Sportsman's Lodge on road to Plum Is. 745-3848.

Provincetown ♦ P'town Positive/PWA Coalition Singles Tea. Second Saturday each month. 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. St. Mary's of the Harbor.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Singles discuss "Breaking Up, Letting Go, Moving On." 7 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Cambridge ♦ Tret Fure in Concert. Indigo/Nightstage, 823 Main St. 7:30 p.m. \$9.50 at door, via Ticketmaster, or at 931-2000. 497-7200.

Jamaica Plain ♦ L/G Contra/Square Dancing. Smoke / drug free. 8 to 11 p.m.; beginners' lessons 7:30 p.m. First Church of J.P., corner Centre and Eliot Sts. Band: Geese in the Bog. \$6. Info and directions: Janet 522-2216, Phil 729-9206, or Scott 536-2014.

12 SUNDAY

Cambridge ♦ Men of All Colors Together: "The Role of the Police in a Democratic Society." 1 to 5 p.m. Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Yard. Info: David 547-1986 or Craig 321-4382.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Annual Mothers Day Gathering for Lesbian Mothers and Children. Arnold Arboretum, Jamaicaaway. 1 p.m. Info: Cindy 267-0900 x209.

Cambridge ♦ Louise Rafkin, ed. of "Different Mothers: Sons & Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives." New Words, 186 Hampshire St. 876-5310.

Boston ♦ Dykes Dialogue: "Lesbian Safe Sex." Jenifer Firestone. 4 p.m. L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Braintree ♦ GLASS: G/L Alliance of South Shore. Second Sunday each month at Unitarian Church 6-8 p.m. Info: Brett 471-7939 or Lisa 335-6085.

13 MONDAY

Brighton ♦ Save OUR Children: Queer Nation's high school outreach and B/L/G visibility squads. Brighton H.S., 25 Warren St. 7:15 a.m. Info: Patrick 876-1257 or Sarah 782-8913.

Boston ♦ CMV Support Group. 4:30 p.m. Boston Living Ctr., 140 Clarendon St. 236-0201.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap: "Charades." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 8 to 10 p.m. 354-8807.

14 TUESDAY

Boston ♦ Boston Coalition for Black Lesbians & Gays. Second Tuesday each month. Harriet Tubman House, 566 Columbus Ave. (Mass. Ave. & Columbus). 6:30 p.m. Info: David 424-6989.

Boston ♦ Support group for lesbian and single women interested or involved in alternative insemination. Info: Jenifer Firestone 267-0900.

Cambridge ♦ 30+ Lesbian Rap: "Battering in the Lesbian Community." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Arlington ♦ Parents and Friends of Lesbians & Gays. Second Tuesday each month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15 p.m. Info: 547-2440 or (508)562-5807.

15 WEDNESDAY

Boston ♦ Downtown Lesbians Brown Bag Lunch. 12:30 p.m. Third Wednesday each month. Info: Julie 725-3562.

Boston ♦ NOW Lesbian Rights Task Force. 7 p.m. NOW, 971 Comm. Ave. 782-1056.

Worcester ♦ Supporters of Worcester Area G/L Youth. Open to G/L/B youth 21 and under. First and third Wednesday each month. United Congregational Church, 6 Institute Rd. 7 p.m. Info: (508)755-0005.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Swing Dance Practice. 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

16 THURSDAY

Boston ♦ "Beyond AIDS 101," an overview of AIDS and HIV. Third Thursday each month. AAC Rm. 401, 131 Clarendon St. Info: 437-6200 *264.

Boston ♦ The Coalition for L/G Civil Rights. Meets every other Thursday. The Center, rm. 202K. 338 Newbury St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Info: David 828-3039.

Cambridge ♦ Drop in at DOB Coffee Night. 7 to 9:30 p.m. Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Northampton ♦ Valley Gay Alliance. First and third Thursdays each month. Basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30p.m. (413) 527-5310.

17 FRIDAY

Cambridge ♦ DOB Provincetown Rendezvous Weekend. Info: Steph 625-9551.

Chesterfield ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club Annual Spring Jamboree. Many activities with camping and potluck dinner. Indian Hollow Group Campsite. Info-line 859-2843.

Worcester ♦ Lavender Lunch for Downtown Worcester G/L/B. Third Friday each month. Thai Orchid, 144 Commercial St. 1 p.m.

Stoughton ♦ SE Mass. Unitarian Univ. G/L/Etc Potluck: Design and make SMUUGLE banner for "Walk for Life" and Gay Pride march. 6 p.m. Directions: 344-7030, 344-3073.

Boston ♦ Opening Reception for Joie d'Art 1991, an art reception for the L/G community, to run 5/17 through 5/19. The L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury. Live entertainment and film / video. \$5. 247-2927 or 262-7760.

Brookline ♦ Am Tikva Shabbat Services. 8 p.m. Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St. Bring something sweet / dairy / veggie for oneg. 926-2536.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Ballroom Dance for L/G and Friends. 8:30 to 11:30 p.m. First Church of J.P., Centre and Eliot Streets. Beginner's cha cha lesson at 8 p.m. Smoke free. \$5. Info: Jason Thomas 859-9455.

18 SATURDAY

Dorchester ♦ Dorchester GALA Spaghetti Fundraiser for Pride Day. Info: Barry 288-1847 or Hotline 825-3737.

Cambridge ♦ "Once Upon Our Time": Multicultural Story Hour for Children (3-8) of G/L Parents and Friends. Third Saturday each month. New Words Bookstore, 186 Hampshire St., Inman St. 10 to 11:15 a.m. Limited space. Sign up: Marian or Jenifer 267-0900.

Danvers ♦ North Shore G/L Alliance Conf. on Women's Issues. 1 to 5 p.m. N. Shore Unitarian Univ. Church, 323 Locust St. (Rte. 35). 745-3848.

Haverhill ♦ Sensual Spiritual Lesbian Poetry. Bring 40 copies of your lesbian art/poetry to make take-home book. Wear no perfumes or other scented products. Womyn only. 1 p.m. Radzukina's, 714 N. Broadway. 521-1333.

Boston ♦ Prime Timers: "Cruises and Gay Resort Vacations." Older gay men. 2 to 4 p.m. Lindemann Health Ctr., 25 Staniford St.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Singles Meet. 7 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Boston ♦ Lesbian Fun and Games. Smoke and alcohol-free. 338 Newbury St. 7 to 10 p.m. Third Saturday each month. \$2 donation.

Cambridge ♦ Ars Nova, a chorus for L/G and friends performs music of Bach, Brahms, Thompson and others. Debut performance. 8 p.m. Paine Hall, Harvard U. Tickets \$10 and \$15 at Glad Day Books, Arborway Video and Sound, and door. 338-1355.

Jamaica Plain ♦ L/G Contra/Square Dancing. Smoke/drug free. 8 to 11 p.m.; beginners' lessons 7:30 p.m. First Church of J.P., corner Centre and Eliot Sts. Band: \$6. \$5. Info and directions: Janet 522-2216, Phil 729-9206, or Scott 536-2014.

19 SUNDAY

Hingham ♦ Am Tikva Takes a Nature Walk at World's End. Meet 1 p.m. Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St., Brookline, or 2 p.m. World's End. Bring bag lunch. 926-2536.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Writers' Group. 1 to 3 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Cambridge ♦ Becky Birtha, an African-American lesbian feminist, reads from "The Forbidden Poems." New Words, 186 Hampshire St. 876-5310.

Boston ♦ Dykes Dialogue: "Relationships and

Contracts." 4 p.m. L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

SE Mass ♦ SMUUGLE: S.E. Mass Unitarian Universalist G/L/etc. Third Sunday each month in various south-of-Boston locations. 344-7030.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Deb Margolin: "Of All the Nerve." A founding member of Split Britches. Emerson Studio Theatre. 69 Brimmer St. 8 p.m. Write to Next Stage, 64 Wyman St. Tickets \$10 advance, \$12 at door. Tickets: 497-1118. Info: 524-0971.

20 MONDAY

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Partners and Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors. Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Hanover, NH ♦ Panelmaking Workshops for the AIDS Memorial Quilt. First and third Mondays each month. Lutheran Church, 5 Summer St. 7 p.m. Info: Thom (603) 632-4145.

Cambridge ♦ "Oppression and Liberation," a presentation and discussion on liberation theology and its relevance to L/G liberation. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 864-8068.

Boston ♦ Queer Nation / Boston. Community Church of Boston, Copley Square above Back Bay Bistro. 7:30 p.m., first and third Mondays each month. Info: 577-8123.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap: "Bisexuality." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 8 to 10 p.m. 354-8807.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbians 20 and Under Meet. 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

21 TUESDAY

Framingham ♦ Framingham G/L Youth Group. People 22 and under, meets first and third Tuesdays each month. Civic League Bldg., 214 Concord St. 6 to 7:30 p.m. Info: write P.O. Box 426, S. Framingham, MA 01701.

Cambridge ♦ 30+ Lesbian Rap: "Sing Along (bring songs)." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Cambridge ♦ Bisexual Women's Rap: "Butch / Femme Roles." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Coming-Out Stories and Panelists. 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Boston ♦ Gay Fathers of Greater Boston: Gay Pride Discussion: Don't Let the Parade Pass You By. 8 to 10 p.m. Lindemann Ctr., 25 Staniford St. 742-7897.

22 WEDNESDAY

Boston ♦ Coming Out Support Group. The Center, 338 Newbury St. Second and fourth Wednesday each month. 8 p.m. Info: 247-2927.

23 THURSDAY

Boston ♦ FCHC Living Well Series: Kundalini Yoga, The Ancient Science of Immune Regeneration. 7 to 9 p.m. Boston Living Ctr., YWCA 7th flr., 140 Clarendon. 267-0900 x287.

Cambridge ♦ Drop in at DOB Coffee Night. 7 to 9:30 p.m. Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

24 FRIDAY

NE Vermont ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club Biking. Info: Lisa 625-2689.

Boston ♦ Friday Night Video Series: "My Beautiful Laundrette." 7 p.m. G/L Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury. 247-2927.

SATURDAYS

Boston ♦ Frontrunners. Meet at Metropolitan Health Club for 2 to 5-mi. run along Charles. Lockers and showers complimentary. 10 a.m. Also: Tues. 12:15 p.m. at MHC; Wed. 6:45 p.m. at Hatch Shell. 282-0013.

Cambridge ♦ Single Mothers' Support Group. Free drop-in group with child care, alternate Saturdays. Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 11am-12:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston ♦ Pink Flamingos. TV/TS of New England. 4 to 6 p.m. 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. 247-2927.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Women's Coffeehouse. Musical entertainment, usually. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. \$5 suggested donation. 983-9530.

SUNDAYS

Boston ♦ Different Strokes Swim Team. Coached

workouts for swimmers of all abilities. 10:15 at Boston City Hosp. swimming pool. Ed 767-0449.

Boston ♦ BAGLY Drop-In Center. (BAGLY = Boston Alliance of G/L Youth) St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 Bowdoin. (800) 42BAGLY.

Boston ♦ Boston Strikers Soccer Club. Weekly novice and club scrimmages. All levels. 3 p.m. Info: Erik 423-0929 or Jeff 876-7612.

Boston ♦ Western Orthodox Church Mass. Arlington St. Church, 351 Boylston St. 227-5794.

Boston ♦ Metropolitan Community Church Worship/Fellowship. 131 Cambridge St. (near Gov't Ctr.). 7 p.m. Info: Rev. Tanis 437-0420.

Boston ♦ Narcotics Anonymous. L/G. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 8 p.m. 247-2927.

Roston ♦ The Gay Dating Show, WUNR 1600AM. 10:30pm-2:30am. Lesbians and gay men.

MONDAYS

Boston ♦ Monday Night Dinners for PWAs and Friends: about 100 people meeting every Monday at AAC for dinner. No reservations required. 6 p.m. AAC, 131 Clarendon St. 437-6200.

Dorchester ♦ Alcoholics Anonymous. First Parish Church, Mtg. Hs. Hill. Beginners 6:30, hardhats 8 p.m.

Worcester ♦ AIDS Project Worcester. A support group for family, friends, concerned others dealing with HIV. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508)755-3773.

Boston ♦ Boston Bisexual Women's Network Coordinating Comm. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Boston ♦ Northern Lights Alternatives Monday Night Rap Group. Talk to others living with HIV. 38 Appleton St. 7:30-9 p.m. Info: Ann O'Rourke 694-0964.

TUESDAYS

Providence, RI ♦ ACT UP/Rhode Island. Call for meeting place (401) 461-4191.

Boston ♦ Beantown Women's Rugby Club. Practice Tuesday and Thursday 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. until June. Info: Sue 776-1649 or Laurie 623-2341.

Gloucester ♦ Healing Circle/Positively Clean and Sober. Healing circle 6:30 to 8 p.m., open to anyone facing chronic or life-threatening illness. Pos. C&S 8 to 9 p.m., for people living with HIV and dealing with subst. abuse issues. N. Shore AIDS Project, 19 Pleasant St. (508) 283-0101.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ G/B Men and their Significant Others. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

Boston ♦ ACT UP/Boston. The Living Center, YWCA, 140 Clarendon St. 7 p.m. 49-ACTUP.

WEDNESDAYS

Hyde Park ♦ Women's Pick-Up Hockey. MDC Hyde Park Rink (near Dedham). 8 to 9 a.m. Info: Janice 326-1600 x350.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Al-Anon with child care, wheelchair accessible. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. 354-8807.

Springfield ♦ Names Project Meeting. New chapter with weekly quilting meetings. All welcome. Frontier. 19 Pearl St. 7 to 10 p.m. (413)788-7459

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ who are in Substance Abuse Recovery. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7:30 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

THURSDAYS

Boston ♦ Boston Area Rape Crisis Center drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Somerville ♦ Thursday Night Dinner Pgm. People w/ and concerned w/ AIDS. Family style. Reservations req. 6:15. Coll. Ave. Un. Methodist Church, 14 Chapel St. \$1. 666-4130.

Provincetown ♦ Positive PWA Coalition Weekly Rap Session. 7:30. 155 Bradford St. Peer led. (508)487-3998.

Boston ♦ The Group. Discussion and social hour. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 266-1129.

FRIDAYS

Watertown ♦ GLOW: G/L of Watertown. 395-4664.

Boston ♦ GCN Friday Night Stuffing Party. Come stuff the paper, eat pizza, and make new friends. GCN, 62 Berkeley St. 5 p.m. 426-4469.



History of Fag Rag part 3

The series concludes

In "The History of Fag Rag, (part 1)," (GCN, Feb 18-24, 1991), Fag Rag collective member Charley Shively examined the early coming together of an enthusiastic group of fags to publish the gay liberation publication Fag Rag. It was one of a whole network of publications offering "a brisk brew of sexual liberation, anarchism, hippie love, drugs, peace, maoism, marxism, rock and roll, folk song, cultural separatist, feminist, effeminist, toful/brown rice, communal living, urban junkie, rural purist, nudist, leather, high camp drag, poetry, essays, pictures, and much more."

In "The History of Fag Rag (part 2)," (GCN, March 4-10, 1991), Shively explored the political and technological developments that helped shape Fag Rag as well as the Fag Rag Collective's occasionally friction filled encounters with the Gay Community News Collective.

By Charley Shively

Sex radical, national (if not international), male, revolutionary, literary and irregular, *Fag Rag* still managed to enter the market economy and find a niche in that market. But we never faltered in trying to find voice for faggots and their culture. By contrast, *OUTLOOK*, published in Berkeley, Calif., promised in its prospectus, "Something attractive and engaging enough that I could even hand it to a politician—or my mother—and say, 'Here, this is what gay people are thinking about these days.'" Thus the family and state become hidden censors; only god (the third part of the fascist trinity) is not mentioned.

Among gay publications, respectability means money and acceptance; but at *Fag Rag* we feel that most faggots bypass such sanitized writings as they look for "something a little more meaty." A copy of *Fag Rag* #9 was placed in the Grolier Bookstore (a store devoted entirely to poetry); a priest picked it up and dropped it in shock when he opened it to Roger Stearns' drawing of a bathhouse orgy.

Fag Rag has never tried to placate our enemies nor to soft-pedal our sexuality. In 1973, I drove some cast members to the University of New Hampshire where they were presenting Jonathan Ned Katz's play, *Come Out!* In return they said I could sell copies of *Fag Rag*, but an official of the



From Fag Rag #40

university intervened, so I said I'd just give copies away. When he denied that, I said "Let's just pass them out as program notes," (since the issue contained a review of the play). Police spies at the performance rushed copies of the paper to the *Manchester Union Leader* newspaper, as well as Gov. Meldrin Thompson, and Warren Rudman, then the state's attorney general. Mitzel's witty article, "How to Proselytize," caught their fancy. The governor demanded an immediate probe of *Fag Rag*, which he called "One of the most

loathsome publications in the English language." (Presumably he considered all publications not in English as loathsome.) The *Union Leader* called for the immediate expulsion of all homosexuals at the university, and in an editorial, William Loeb suggested that god might destroy Durham, N.H., as he had Sodom and Gomorrah. *Fag Rag* was labeled "unspeakably filthy," and the "most rotten, filthiest, degrading piece of literature" they'd ever seen.

The literary/movement dialectic in *Fag*

Rag played itself out most pointedly in grant applications. After the barbarian invasion of the '80s, few remember the days of the early '70s when the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) began dribbling funds into African-American, women's and gay publishing. But to apply for a grant from the federal government violates fundamental anarchist principles. Lawrence Ferlinghetti of City Lights Books denounced the NEA money as contaminated and contaminating. The money could be seen as a bribe to buy out militancy and divert revolutionary energies into safer "literary" projects; the arts could be kept on a leash. Once publications were dependent on the fed's trough, they could be brought to heel by leash tightening when the rebels began to get out of control.

Those opting for grants argued that the excluded should demand what was rightfully their own and that, while the government money was contaminated, so were all money transactions. Thus City Lights Books might not take grants but did charge for the books and magazines that they published. In their dealings with *Fag Rag*, the bookstore acted like most other straight bookstores: suspicious of gay publications, slow to pay and reluctant to display.

Those seeking grant support found no easy welcome in the NEA. First *Fag Rag* approached the money trough through its subsidiary Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, (CCLM) which itself was a somewhat defanged organization, less radical than the Committee of Small Magazine Editors and Publishers (COSMEP) and thus funded by the NEA. In a 1974 letter to COSMEP, William Phillips, founder of the anti-communist *Partisan Review* and then chairman of CCLM, claimed that CCLM's "aim is to respect and reward quality." "Quality" was then and has remained a term to describe straight, white, middle-class literature: "quality" that excludes the African, Asian, Native American, Women's or gay voices. CCLM nonetheless played a mediating role between the NEA and foundations, which (in Phillips' words), "are afraid of the radical, experimental nature of magazines and 'dirty' things in them."

In 1972, *Fag Rag* applied to the CCLM and they threw our application away (or claimed never to have received it). In 1973, we tried again, and were turned down. We

Continued on page 11

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